

GJENNEM DE GULES LAND

OG

KRIGEN I ØSTASIEN

AF

W. COUCHERON-AAMOT

FORF. AF «FRA DEN KINESISKE MUR TIL JAPANS HELLIGE BJERG» M. FL.

Med 90 Illustrationer og 4 Karter



KRISTIANIA

P. T. MALLINGS BOGHANDELS

FORLAG

THROUGH THE LAND OF THE YELLOW PEOPLE

and

THE WAR IN EAST-ASIA 1894-95

by

W. COUCHERON-AAMOT

AUTHOR OF "FROM THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA TO JAPAN'S HOLY MOUNTAIN," ETC.

With 90 Illustrations and 4 Maps



KRISTIANIA
P.T. MALLINGS BOOKSELLERS
and PUBLISHERS
1895

Til

Fru Professor Michael Sars

født Østelhaven.

Translator's Note

My grandfather was born 29 January 1868 as one of eleven children born to a small-town lawyer in Egersund, Norway. He went to sea while still a teenager, but then somehow managed to get an appointment to the Norwegian Naval Academy in Horten, Norway. Upon graduation he wrote a small book about his experiences there, "*Fra Orlogslivet*" ("From Navy Life") and also a short novel, "*Sjøkadet West*" ("Naval Ensign West"). He then traveled out to China in 1889 and joined the Imperial Chinese Customs Service as 3^d officer on the ICCS cruiser "*Ling-Fēng*" 1890-92, when he resigned from the Customs Service and returned home as described in "*Fra den Kinesiske Mur til Japans Hellige Bjerg samt Hjemreisen to Norge*" ("From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain and the Return Voyage Home"), published in 1893.

"*Gjennem de Gules Land*" og "*Krigen i Østasien*" ("Through the Land of the Yellow People" and "The War in East Asia"), published in one volume in 1895, is an account of his experiences aboard "*Ling-Fēng*", and of the 1st Sino-Japanese War up to the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

He does not explicitly say so, but obviously the 1st Sino-Japanese War was fought after he had left the area. I think he took the opportunity to write "*Krigen i Østasien*" from the contemporary foreign newspaper reports available in the Norwegian Ministry of the Interior, where he was employed after his return home, and views based on his observations during his travels.

"*Li Hung-chang's Fædreland*" og "*Østasiens Historie efter Freden til Shimonoseki*" ("Li Hung-chang's Fatherland" and "The History of East Asia after the Treaty of Shimonoseki") followed in 1898, the former consisting largely of a compilation of the author's previously published magazine articles describing Chinese society to a Scandinavian public, and the latter a supplement to "*Krigen i Østasien*" describing the Japanese conquest of Formosa (Taiwan) and the immediate aftermath of the First Sino-Japanese War in China and Japan.

Since my grandfather wrote in 19th century Danish, I thought English translations might be worthwhile.

Introductory Notes

I do not have much to say about the first part of this work; it must speak for itself. However, I feel it necessary to give some preliminary remarks regarding the second part of the work.

A lively imagination is a blessing when writing fiction, but when venturing out on political slick ice it is best to put imagination aside and use common sense.

A fundamental requirement for a politician is the ability to predict the future based on *historic experience*. If one does not know the past, it is impossible to draw conclusions about the future. I only mention this with respect to the many flights of fancy with which Europe's leading newspapers and periodicals have served their readers from the beginning of the war to its conclusion by the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

Very few Europeans have studied the political and cultural history of Asia – they can easily be counted on one's fingers. The opinions of these gentlemen carried little or no weight during the war's alarms, since they in no way corresponded with the "factual information" that war correspondents and wire services provide to the interested public.

Now that the war has ended and equanimity of mind is restored, a chronological recapitulation of the numerous bizarre telegrams could provoke laughter, even among those possessed of a larger than usual quantum of jaundiced morosity. But since my task is of a more serious nature, I have as much as possible tried to leave the telegrams to the funny papers. However, I will mention some of the reasons for their more or less distant relationship with the naked truth.

When war was declared, the Japanese government issued a stern prohibition against publication of military movements and actions. Only reports likely to confuse unauthorized persons were allowed to pass the strict censorship imposed on telegraph stations and post offices in the theatres of war.

The foreign correspondents who were sent to Korea were desperate, but of course they had to report something – and that as often as possible. No wonder then, that they eagerly grabbed the "official" bulletins, which the courteous Japanese were pleased to pass to them. The intelligent islanders have a keen sense of the weight of public opinion, and it was of the greatest importance for them to get Europe on their side, while the battle was fought with the "heathen" Chinese. Many European papers gave their readers the impression that *the*

war was fought between Western civilization represented by Japan – and Chinese barbarians.

On the other side, the majority of the Chinese officials have constantly shown that they do not care a fig for what the Europeans think or feel. They have not understood that their country, although larger than all the European states put together, still would be well served by gaining some sympathy for their side.

China will probably survive as a state when many present empires have vanished into history, but the nation would escape many humiliations if its leading men realized the advantages of winning the sympathy of the other half of the civilized world. Sympathy leads to understanding.

In addition to correspondence with officers who served in the war, I have, among other sources, consulted the following newspapers and periodicals: *Japan Official Gazette*, *Nippon*, *Mainichi*, *Japan Herald*, *Korean Repository*, *Japan Mail*, *Jiji Shimpō*, *Nichi Nichi Shimbun*, *Rising Sun*, *Kobe Chronicle*, *Yorodzu Choho*, *Admiral Itō's report*, *Jukichi Inouye's brochure*, *North China Daily News*, *North China Herald*, *Shanghai Mercury*, *Peking & Tientsin Times*, *Hongkong Telegraph*, *The Peking Gazette*, *Hupao*, *Shenpao*, *Chefoo Express*, *The New York Times*, *The Times of London*, *North-American Review*, *La Marine Française*, *MilitärWochenblatt*, *Revista General de Marina*, *Marine Rundschau*, *Naval Annual*, *The Army and Navy Gazette*, *Esai de Stratègie Navale*, *Norsk Tidsskrift for Sjøvesen*, etc. etc.

My historic-political observations on the Korean question was begun during my stay in East-Asia. As I do not belong to any colonizing nation, I feel that I can give an unbiased

exposition of this problem. Through conversations with a couple of gentlemen who took active parts in the Korean politics of recent years, many misconceptions in the extensive sources have been eliminated.

While working on the maps included with this volume, I have had occasion to notice a number of inaccuracies in the maps commercially available – especially with regard to names. These are often given as a mixed up jumble of European, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese names for the respective places and regions. I have tried to keep to the names that are used in East-Asia.

I will take this opportunity to thank all those who have generously given of their time and energy to assist me with valuable information, such as: The Chinese and Japanese embassies in London and Berlin, The Board of Trade, the Norwegian-Swedish consul in London, Mr. Juhlin-Dannfeldt, the head of Norway's Statistical Central Bureau., Mr. A.N. Kjær, Director of Customs, Mr. I.M. Daae, the commander of the navy base in Tientsin, Loh Feng-loh, and many more.

I also wish to thank my publisher for the generosity he has shown me by giving me *carte blanche* for the furnishings of the work. Many of the drawings and photographic prints used have been less than ideal for reproduction, and a lot of work and expense has been involved in giving the illustrations a satisfactory appearance.

The material available for my discussion of the war has been very extensive – almost an embarrassment of riches. To extract the truth from the many contradictory presentations by diverse sources has been a more difficult task than may readily be imagined.

I have found it neither convenient nor possible to limit the extent of the work to the number of pages originally envisioned, but I hope the well-disposed reader will not regret having received a more comprehensive – and thus more valuable – exposition of the latest events in the East.

Kristiania, 1 November 1895

W. Coucheron-Aamot

(This page intentionally left blank.)

CONTENTS

I

THROUGH THE LAND OF THE YELLOW PEOPLE

Chapter One	Page 1
Introduction: The world's oldest civilization? – A difficult problem – The discovery of China – The political geography of the empire – <i>Kow wa</i> and <i>Shih-pa-sang</i> – Eastern and western cultures – Who will win?	
Chapter Two	Page 11
The cause of the mission riots in 1891: The Chinese people's knack for joining together – Secret political societies – <i>San-ho-hui</i> – Organization – Ceremonies – <i>Ko-lao-hui</i> .	
Chapter Three	Page 20
The outbreak: The destruction of the mission stations – The emperor's proclamation – China's political posture.	
Chapter Four	Page 28
An unexpected trip to Canton: Onboard the gunboat " <i>Li Fêng</i> " – The officers' speculations – An unexpected order – Up the Pearl River – History of Canton – The European settlement – A day in Canton – Street scenes – The 500 Wise Men's Temple – Marco Polo – Enterprising monks – Boyish pranks, not anti-Christianity – Visiting shops – Ivory ball – The 5 Stags' Temple – The water clock – The pirates capture of the steamer " <i>Namoa</i> " – Canton's place of execution – The examination stalls – On the old city wall	

Chapter Five Page 72

The newspaper feud: The political sky clears – Discussion in the press

- A *Chinese – Defensio Populi ad Populos* – "Hunan Literature" –
- The question about opening Hunan Province – It grows darker again
- Storm approaching – "*Ling-Fêng*" gets orders to go north.

Chapter Six Page 79

Hongkong: The second largest port in the world – The island's history –

- A Dutch merchant as the united kingdoms' consul – Smuggling –
- Hongkong's 50th anniversary – A visit to the capital city Victoria – In *Hongkong Hotel – Victoria Peak – The Happy Valley*

Chapter Seven Page 106

Mr. Mason's high treason: From south to north – Shanghai –

- Revolutionary movements – Arms smuggling – Mason's arrest and prosecution – Li Hung-chang breaks the Western powers' coalition.

Chapter Eight Page 124

2,500 kilometers up the Yangtze Kiang: We leave Shanghai – A

- brief description of the river's course – Yangtze pilots – Chinkiang and the "Emperor's Canal" – Nanking – The porcelain pagoda – Wuhu – Legends of the Orphan Rocks – Kiukiang.

Chapter Nine Page 152

Arrival in Hankow – "*Ling-Fêng*" is ordered to Ichang – Hankow –

- Tea and tea drinking – Chang Chih-tung – Farther up the Yangtze Kiang –Ichang.

Chapter Ten Page 178

Shipping and trade: Prospects for steamship traffic on the Upper

- Yangtze – *Junks* vs. steamships – The hard life of the *junk* haulers – Norway's shipping in East Asia – General export association.

Chapter Eleven **Page 196**
In the center of China: The attack on the Europeans in Ichang – The
Taotai of Shasih's visit onboard "*Ling-Fêng*" – An excursion to "The
Pillar of Heaven" – More disturbances – *Ko-lao-hui's* last convulsion
– Revolt in Mongolia – Peace on Earth.

Chapter Twelve **Page 216**
New Year's Day
Chapter Thirteen **Page 231**
A dinner with the banker Ching Lao-ping.

Chapter Fourteen **Page 236**
Ho Chao-kuin – Bishop Benjamin Christians and Père Braun –
The pagoda –Wen Siang-ling's wedding.

Chapter Fifteen **Page 247**
Down the Yangtze Kiang and northward to the war zone.

II

THE WAR IN EAST-ASIA

Chapter Sixteen **Page 251**
Japan and the Japanese: *Ji pên* fifty years ago – Future prospects –
Conflict with the barbarians of the 19th century – The Japanese forgot
their domestic differences in order to defend their country – The
mikado and his advisers lead the way for social reforms – The raptors
from the West did not find any carrion – The new Japan.

Chapter Seventeen **Page 257**
The fight for Korea: Attacks on Korea's relationship with China – The
king of Korea's letter to the treaty powers – Russia's growing
influence in Asia – The political significance of the Trans-Siberian
Railway – The Japanese forestall the Russians.

Chapter Eighteen**Page 266**

The difference between the Chinese and Japanese national characters – Kublai Khan's attempt to conquer Japan – The sad fate of the armada – A short-lived peace – The emperor of China gives the *shogun* Ashikaga the title of *Nippon O* – The raids resume – A Chinese Jeanne d'Arc – The Japanese freebooters withdraw northward.

Chapter Nineteen**Page 273**

An old legend about Korea – Empress Jingu's war – "The crowned monkey" will conquer China – A half million Japanese invade Korea – The Chinese come to the rescue – Shifting fortunes – Hideyoshi dies and the army returns – The ear grave in Kyoto.

Chapter Twenty**Page 286**

Japan annexes Liu-Kiu – The Koreans challenge the Japanese – The incursion on Formosa – Japanese intrigues in Korea – The Japanese legation is sent packing – Li Hung-chang appoints the German Count von Möllendorf as the king of Korea's adviser – The rebellion in 1884 – Political disturbances in Japan – The sorry condition of the Korean people.

Chapter Twenty-one**Page 300**

Kim Ok Kuin is lured over to Shanghai and is murdered in a hotel – Assassination attempt in Tokyo on one of the conspirator's minions – The Korean ambassador goes home without taking leave of the emperor.

Chapter Twenty-two**Page 307**

An excellent pretext for incitement – Revolt in southern Korea – The revolutionaries' proclamation – The king begs the Chinese emperor for assistance – Chinese troops land at Asan – Japan drops the mask – Deliberations in Peking – The dowager empress.

Chapter Twenty-three **Page 326**

Li Hung-chang wants peace – The Japanese press agitate for war –
The king of Korea is taken prisoner – The English transport ship
"Kowshing" is sunk – A naval engagement – The "victory" at Seiwan
– The Chinese and Japanese emperors' declarations of war.

Chapter Twenty-four **Page 352**

China and Japan's military forces before the war.

Chapter Twenty-five **Page 376**

From Asan to Pingyang: The Chinese cross the Yalu River and move
southward – The battle at Hwangju and General Yeh's reappearance –
The Japanese land more troops in Korea – General Wei and the war
chest.

Chapter Twenty-six **Page 383**

The battle at Pingyang

Chapter Twenty-seven **Page 397**

The naval battle at Yalu

Chapter Twenty-eight **Page 432**

Change in the Japanese program – Break between Peking and
Tientsin – The war of the press agencies – The Japanese cross the
Yalu River.

Chapter Twenty-nine **Page 442**

The conquest of Port Arthur

Chapter Thirty	Page 458
The empress dowager's birthday – The audience protocol question and its solution – Custom director Detring's unsuccessful mission to Japan.	
Chapter Thirty-one	Page 467
The winter campaign in Manchuria.	
Chapter Thirty-two	Page 480
The conquest of Wei-hai-wei.	
Chapter Thirty-three	Page 497
Bureaucracy and waging war – Chang Ying-huan and Shao Yu- lien's peace mission – Negotiations in Hiroshima with Count Itō and Baron Mutsu – Japan wishes to continue the war, and the envoys must return with their mission unaccomplished.	
Chapter Thirty-four	Page 506
The Treaty of Shimonoseki.	
Chapter Thirty-five	Page 517
Continuation of the winter campaign in Manchuria.	
Chapter Thirty-six	Page 522
From Shimonoseki to Chefoo.	
Chapter Thirty-seven	Page 529
Epilogue.	

Illustrations

	Page
1. Ho Chao-kuin and W. Coucheron-Aamot.	—
2. "Ling-Fêng."	32
3. Emperor Kang Hi.	33
4. Sha-meen.	35
5. A street in Canton.	39
6. Temple of the 500 Wise Men.	44
7. Execution of the " <i>Namoa</i> " pirates.	56
8. The viceroy's park.	65
9. The temple on the city wall.	69
10. The Catholic Church seen from the river.	70
11. View of Victoria from the harbor.	81
12. Down by the wharves at the 50 th Jubilee.	85
13. Queen's Road.	89
14. Queen's Road.	93
15. Queen's Road – The Clock Tower.	96
16. The Victoria Peak Tram.	99
17. Happy Valley Cemetery.	103
18. Shanghai seen from the river.	107
19. The Pamir question.	121
20. Silver Island ["Little Orphan Rock"].	131
21. Chinkiang – The European settlement.	134
22. The Porcelain Pagoda.	137
23. Ruins of the Porcelain Pagoda.	139
24. Wuhu.	142
25. The men are busy plowing the fertile fields.	146
26. Great Orphan and Tortoise Rock.	149
27. The <i>Bund</i> , Hankow.	155
28. Sorting Tea leaves.	158

	Page
29. Pressing the tannin out of tea leaves.	162
30. A European agent notes the weight the tea chests.	164
31. Chan Chih-tung.	168
32. The inner convent garden after the fire.	199
33. <i>Taotai</i> Fang's calling card.	203
34. "Ling Fêng" – The rifle div. "Clear for action!"	207
35. View of the Upper Yangtze.	211
36. New Year's week.	219
37. A European New Year's card with Chinese motifs.	227
38. A festive get-together.	232
39. The pagoda at Ichang.	239
40. The "Ear grave" in Kyoto.	284
41. Tai Wen Kun.	293
42. Kim Ok Kuin.	302
43. Facsimiles of calling cards found in the murdered man's valise.	304
44. Li Hui.	311
45. The landing at Chemulpo.	313
46. Mr. Otori, Japanese ambassador in Seoul.	314
47. Li Chok.	315
48. Prince Kung.	321
49. On the deck of " <i>Kowshing</i> ."	331
50. " <i>Naniwa</i> " and " <i>Kowshing</i> ."	333
51. Popular depiction of naval battle at Asan.	338
52. Major General Oshima.	339
53. The battle of Seiwan.	341
54. Mutsu Hito.	346
55. Kwang Hsü.	348

	Page
56. Development stages of the Japanese army in the 19 th century.	365
57. A velocipedist in the Japanese army scout corps.	367
58. General Kawakami.	368
59. Japanese postcard.	371
60. A couple of Japanese generals' solemn meeting in Seoul with Mr. Otori, who is accompanied by the new Korean cabinet ministers.	381
61. Marshal Yamagata.	384
62. The Battle of Pingyang.	387
63. General Tso Pao-kuei flees.	391
64. Discussing strategies onboard a Japanese warship.	400
65. The Japanese landing in Chemulpo.	404
66. Constantin von Hanneken.	407
67. Admiral Itō and Admiral Ting.	411
68. The squadrons approach each other.	412
69. Captain Sakamoto.	414
70. Vice Admiral Kabayama.	415
71. Commander Tang Shi-cheong.	418
72. The sinking of " <i>Chih-Yuen.</i> "	420
73. Mercy! Mercy!	437
74. The <i>mikado's</i> arrival in Hiroshima.	439
75. The Japanese army's crossing of the Yalu River.	440
76. Port Arthur map.	444
77. The Japanese fleet and some transport ships' anchorages [in Dalian Bay] in mid-November.	445
78. The day after the capture of Port Arthur.	453
79. War news!	459
80. Customs director Detring.	464

	Page
81. A scene from a Japanese field hospital.	474
82. Japanese officers interrogate Chinese prisoners.	477
83. Wei-hai-wei map.	482
84. A Japanese officer is carried from the battlefield.	485
85. The Japanese fleet's reconnaissance at Wei-hai-wei 17 August 1894.	489
86. Marshal Oyama.	492
87. Vice Admiral McClure.	495
88. Count Itō Hirobumi.	510
89. Popular representation of attack on Haichêng.	519
90. Li Hung-chang and his signature.	535

MAPS

1. Map of Asia.
2. General map of China proper.
3. Sketch map of the author's journey on "*Ling-Fêng*" up the Yangtze Kiang).
4. Map of the theatre of war.

I

**THROUGH THE LAND OF THE
YELLOW PEOPLE**



Ho Chao-kuin

W. G. Morrison (Ming)

Chapter One

Introduction

The world's oldest civilization? – A difficult problem – The discovery of China – The political geography of the empire – *Kow wa* and *Shih-pa-sang* – Eastern and western cultures – Who will win?

In the final years of the 19th century since the birth of Christ the civilized world faces a major problem, whose solution may be of great importance for the development of the human race in the future.

Two majestic forces have collided, two distinctive civilizations, which both exercise an unlimited dominance over its adherents. On one side stand the western nations, infused with an electric driving force that have inspired them to carry out great undertakings, a force that still demands expansion and progress with undiminished strength.

It is this driving force that has brought the men of the western world to the portals of the Chinese empire. They knocked on the gate, would force their way in without ceremonies with the barbarian's threats and language of physical power. They succeeded in making a small breach, since the empire's rulers had become drowsy from an Asian

hegemony unchallenged through ages. Some of the Europeans got in, but they forgot to sing their songs of victory.

For what did they see inside the walls? They saw an old and venerable giant, who received the uninvited guests with the dignity inherited through millennia. In other words, they saw the greatest cultural society that the sun has ever shone on. They met a race that had gone through many phases of development and had still come through its trials, intact and strengthened, ready to take up the most difficult fight for survival through peaceful means. They met a race for whom the clamor of weapons was an abomination; a nation that had placed men of peace in the seats of power.

When we study the history of civilization, we find that the development of civilization is a single, continuous chain. The Germanic peoples learned from the Romans, the Romans learned from the Greeks, the Greeks from the Egyptians and the peoples of Asia Minor, and these again from the ancient Babylonians.

Some years ago, it was thought that this was as far as it could be traced. Behind Babylon and Niniveh lay barbarity and darkness.

But some anthropologists were not content with this result. By closer examination of the Chinese language and comparing it with other oriental tongues, they thought they could prove that the Chinese was an immigrant people, and then the problem was to find out *where* they had come from.

In the beginning there was, as always with new discoveries, much fumbling around. There is hardly an extinct or living Asian population that has not had the honor of being suggested as the ancestral root of the tree that now shades all of East Asia.

But little by little the scientific horizon has become clearer, and based on the discoveries that the Orientalists Terrien de la Couperie, Lenormant, Sayce, and Oppert have made in the last few years, we can now with relative certainty assume that *the Chinese* is the world's oldest civilization, and the white race is thought to have received its culture from the ancestors of the Chinese.

It has been thought that when the ancestors of the white race left their original home in Central Asia to seek a better home by the fertile banks of the Euphrates and Tigris, the conquerors here met a tribe that lived in an ordered society with arts and architecture. From this people, whom the Babylonians called *Akkadians* or *Sumerians*, the nomads from Central Asia then learned the ABC's of civilization.

From Euphrates and Tigris the principles of our civilization then spread further to Greece and Rome and farther on up to us today.

Exposed to the harassments of the conquerors, the peaceful Akkadians presumably withdrew to the east to the northern parts of the present Chinese Empire, and from here, the race has in the last 5,000 years spread farther and farther south and has constructed the world's largest social community.

*

*

*

It is thought that the first time a word is found in ancient texts that seem to point to China, is in the Bible in the Book of Isaiah, wherein he prophesies about Israel's coming glory, and of all the lands that shall send tribute, he says in Ch. 49, V. 12: "Behold, these will come from afar; And lo, these will come from the north and from the west, And these from the land of Sinim."

Later, the astronomer Claudius Ptolemaeus described a country that he called *Thinai* or *Thin*, a land, which on the east extended to the limits of the inhabited world, and on the west to *Imaus* or the present Pamir.

The Greeks and the Romans seem to have known of China under the name *Serica*, since the three peoples that Pliny mentions: The Indians, the Scythians, and the Seres apparently can be readily translated into their modern forms: The Indians, the Tartars, and the Chinese.

Some of the poets in Augustan era also mentioned the Seres and their country, but always in vague, indefinite terms.

In China's northernmost province, Shanxi, coins have been found with the picture of Tiberius, and these are thought to be from the reign of Antoninus Pius, since a deputation then seems to have been sent to the ruler of the Seres.

The Arabs, who came into contact with the Chinese in the eighth century, called the country *Sinnae* or *Thsin*.

In the Middle Ages, the Chinese empire was known as *Cathay*. The original form of the word was *Kitai*, which is still the name for China used by the nations of Central Asia.

The first time Cathay was heard about in Europe was in the thirteenth century when the Mongols moved down from their high plains and under Genghis Khan began a campaign

of conquest that it seemed might reach the shores of the Atlantic Ocean.

Kublai Khan, Genghis' great grandson, completed the conquest of Cathay and then *ruler over a larger area and a larger population than any human, before or since, has brought in under one scepter.*

It was in Kublai's time the Venetian Marco Polo visited the far-away Cathay. He stayed there several years at the Mongol Khan's court, and it was only by the famous traveler's return that some Europeans first heard particulars about the marvelous realm out there in the Far East.

The Mongolian storm surge, that had threatened to engulf all of Christianity, later slowly receded, but in the meantime it had broken down all the political walls from the Baltic to the Yellow Sea. — Asia lay open, and one European after the other found his way out to Cathay, some as official envoys, some as missionaries. But it still was a long time before the Europeans got more detailed knowledge of the large empire that was to halt their arrogant dreams of conquest.

The present day China is larger than Europe in both area and population.

Politically the colossus is divided into:

- I. The vassal lands.
- II. China proper.

When the Chinese speak about the vassal lands, they always use the designation *Kow-wa* — beyond the gates and the passes — and these dependencies literally do lie beyond

"The Great Wall" and behind high mountain chains that separate them from China proper.

If a rebel chieftain during a change in dynasties has had luck with him, he will certainly try to also gain possession of the vassal lands, since they have sometime in the past acknowledged the suzerainty of the Chinese emperor, but the usurper will still consider himself to have succeeded when the 18 provinces of *Shih-pa-sang*, China proper, have sworn him obedience.

The vassal lands will be only briefly described. The largest is Mongolia, which mainly consists of high plains and deserts. The area is ca. 100 times as large as Denmark. Only a couple of million nomads – descendants of Genghis' proud warriors – live in this huge area.

Manchuria is twice as large in area as France, but has hardly one fourth as many inhabitants. This country is mainly famous for being the homeland of the Manchu dynasty. The Manchu ruler Shun Chih seized the Dragon Throne in 1644, and his descendants have occupied it since.

Turkistan is inhabited by a half million Moslems. It was here that the famous Yakub Beg in the 1860s began to form a large kingdom, which for a short time seemed to threaten even China's independence. But when Yakub died, his grand edifice collapsed, and Turkistan is governed now as before by a Chinese commissar.

The mountainous country of Tibet is 3 times as large as France and has 6 million inhabitants. Tibet is the home of the Lamaist form of Buddhism, and it was from here that Madame Blavatsky, the Theosophical Society's late priestess,

got her *mahatmas*, a notion that Max Müller made such bloody fun of in an article in *The Nineteenth Century*.

Finally we have the Korean Peninsula, which the Japanese seem likely to overindulge themselves on. Korea is about as large as Great Britain and has approximately 10 million inhabitants.

All in all, *Kow-wa*, or the vassal lands, comprise an area of 8 million square kilometers, or $\frac{4}{5}$ the size of Europe.

Each of the countries is inhabited by different nationalities, who speak their own languages and have their own distinctive customs and traditions. But the Chinese consider these to be quite barbaric and consider, even more than the Europeans, *Kow-wa* as uncultivated, disagreeable regions. It is therefore not uncommon for the emperor to transfer disfavored officials to some administrative post or other in one of these regions. *Kow-wa* is – simply put – China's Siberia.

But despite this bleak view of the vassal lands, the Chinese people's mercantile and colonizing spirit has caused a large number of the Celestial Empire's sons to voluntarily migrate into these regions, some as homesteaders and some as merchants. And these pioneers' Chinese customs and traditions have little by little raised the low cultural level in these countries. Tibet has been least affected, but then the Tibetans are also the people that are already nearest to the Chinese in civilization.

*

*

*

After this brief description of the vassal lands we will for now just concern ourselves with *Shih-pa-sang* – China proper, a country that is basically inhabited by *one* race,

which has *one* written language and *the same* national customs and traditions.

The average person's ideas of this vast empire's significance and size are very hazy. Most people imagine a country as large as – well, as for example France – and a region throughout as densely inhabited as London or Paris. But this we know to be a misconception. China is not even as densely inhabited as Germany. It is only because of its vast area that *Shih-pa-sang*'s 350 million inhabitants have got their needed elbow room.

The 18 provinces cover an area of approximately 4 million square kilometers. This is equal to 100 x Denmark, 14 x Great Britain, 13 x Norway, or 7½ x France.

The barriers of its physical geography have closed the Chinese off from contact with the outer world. This is supposed to be the reason why the Chinese race for thousands of years has become a single homogenous nation, even though it has spread itself over such a vast territory.

This is believed by many, but it is not the case, since several of the provinces are separated by large rivers, compared to which the Rhine is but a creek, and by mountain chains, which are comparable to the Alps and the Pyrenees in wildness and as difficult to pass over.

What may then be the cause of this singular phenomenon, that the Chinese race, on opposite sides of great rivers, on either side of mighty mountain chains, has become a nation despite the physical barriers?

A closer study of China's history and literature will give the solution of the mystery. One will find that China's teachers have since ancient times kept their eyes on certain

unchanging elements in human nature. On this foundation they have built up one common institution after the other, which all have served to strengthen the patriotic sentiment between the individuals. These institutions have steadily been improved through the ages – and observe the resulting monument! The most magnificent the world has ever seen. A monument as superior to Egypt's pyramids as the spirit is superior to materialism. A unified nation of 350 million of the earth's most industrious, modest, peaceful, sober, and perhaps most talented people.

The Chinese began their national existence with the oldest of the ancient civilizations; they have outlived their contemporaries, the Babylonians and Egyptians; they have outlived the Persians, Greeks, Romans, and it is a good question whether they might not outlive us too; since the Chinese today possess as much youthfulness, as much life force as the youngest of the young nations.

And in this long life, many believe that the nation's cultural development has stood still! Such an idea sounds ridiculous to those who have a little knowledge of cultural history, and I only mention it because I so often meet with such utterances. That a people could stand on the same level of development for thousands of years would be an unexplainable phenomenon. A nation that does not progress is doomed to go under, since then it would return to its primitive roots.

No, the Chinese have not stood still, but the difference between our cultural development and theirs is the following: The West has in two and a half thousand years developed from a very low stage to the high, superior level we have now

arrived at – in the last 100 years – with a rush. The Chinese, on the other hand, had a relatively high culture already five thousand years ago, and on this foundation they have built through the ages – slowly, but surely.

As I have previously stated in "The Chinese and the Christian Mission," I believe that in the future we will see a violent conflict between the Eastern and Western cultures. What the result might be is only known to He, who controls all of humanity's fate. For those who have studied both cultural developments through time, a compromise is regrettably almost inconceivable. One thing is sure: The clash will have greater consequences than any other historic conflict between different races.

Chapter Two

The cause of the mission riots in 1891.

The Chinese people's knack for joining together – Secret political societies – *San-ho-hui* – Organization – Ceremonies – *Ko-lao-hui*.

No race possesses a greater ability to join together for a common purpose than the Chinese.

Many centuries before the West recognized the truth of the adage: "Unity makes strength," the Chinese applied the motto in practice. No country is as rich in associations and societies as the "Celestial Empire," and these associations *en masse* reach into every branch of their social life.

For now, we will only concern ourselves with the secret political societies, which have often played a prominent role in China's history. Their name is legion, but there is still doubts as to whether each society is independent of the others, or if they all are just branches of one single large alliance.

The most famous and most feared of these political societies are known under the names *San-ho-hui* and *Ko-lao-hui*.

The first named society is very old, but did not gain any significant importance until after the Manchu conquest of China in the mid 17th century – at the same time as the Freemasons began to gain ground in Europe. And there are so many similarities between the two that some think they may have a common origin.

After the Manchu ruler Shun Chih gained the throne in 1644, several years passed before the southeastern provinces submitted to the rule of the Tartars, and right up to the Taiping Rebellion of 1848 – 65 these districts were the main base for *San-ho-hui*.

The society's original aim was, like that of the West's Freemasons, to search for the pure light, or the truth. Now, the word for truth, or the pure, clear light, is *Ming* in Chinese, and that was also the name of the old dynasty that held the throne before the Manchus. When the society acquired a political character, "*Ming*" came to mean the dynasty, and *San-ho-hui*'s slogan has since then been: *Fang Ching, fuh Ming!* – Down with *Ching*, or the Manchus; restore *Ming*, or a national dynasty!

Under the first forceful rulers of the foreign dynasty, the society could only exist by maintaining the deepest secrecy, but it still experienced a strong growth. Lodge after lodge was formed, and the members held their meetings at night in secluded places so as not to be discovered by the authorities. The meeting houses also usually were surrounded by pitfall traps for security's sake.

The leaders of the society at the same time invented a very complicated set of ceremonies, the details of which were fully known only to the grand masters.

This seems often to be the case with secret societies. The original aims are lost little by little by difficult and sometimes ridiculous rituals, which are supposedly created for the good of the society, but actually are invented by the society's more gifted members in order to win power over the rank and file. Just the same tendency as we seem to detect in the religious hierarchies. People have always longed for something better than what life down here offers us. The intelligent elements have understood the sign of the times and presented themselves to the masses as individuals who possessed certain secrets and revelations – the key to the object of the desires – Heaven, Nirvana, or whatever name the blessed home where all misery shall end might be called by.

Mr. Giles, the best known of the Chinese language researchers, once described in a lecture he gave in the "Ionic Lodge" in Amoy^{*} a candidate's initiation into *San-ho-hui*, and I will here give a brief summary of the ceremony:

First the candidate shall take a bath and be dressed in white clothes. Instead of shoes and socks he must be content with straw sandals, "since no one notices the poor," say the brothers who help him dress. Then a signal is given by the entrance to the lodge, and the candidate is led in to the gathering. While he kneels at an altar, he must repeat the solemn obligations, which one of the members read aloud, and this takes some time, since the ritual consists of not less than 37 articles.

Before the ceremony begins, they cut the head off a white rooster, and the candidate drinks a little of the blood mixed with wine. The death of the rooster symbolizes that he must

* A Chinese treaty port.

be considered as dead to the outside world before he can become one of the society's brothers. A white rooster is chosen because it symbolizes alertness and purity of the heart.

When the 37 articles have been read, a lighted joss stick is placed near the candidate, who bows down to the ground while requesting the brothers to extinguish his life spirit as slowly as the joss stick is consumed, if he ever avoids his obligations or reveals secrets. He is then examined by the lodge's "Master," and his "sponsor" advises him how he should answer.

The Master: "How high is the lodge?"

Answer: "As high as the eye can see."

By this is meant that the society's activities are only limited by the blue sky.

The Master: "How wide?"

Answer: "As wide as the 2 capitals and the 13 provinces."

This means that the society extends throughout the empire. As stated above, China now has 18 provinces, but under the Ming dynasty there were only 13. The 2 capitals are Peking and Nanking. The first Ming emperor resided in the latter.

After the examination, the candidate must pass through several more ceremonies before he finally is declared a member of the society.

The next morning the new brother must visit the lodge's secretary. Here he receives a book, which contains the secret signs and other information pertinent to his function as a member.

When the brothers meet, they may recognize each other by asking: "Where do you come from?"

"The East."

"Where are you going?"

"To a place where I may find my brothers."

If a member tries to gain admittance to a lodge without having the secret password, the outer guard cries: "I will kill you!" and the brother answers: "My throat is tough, I fear not."

Mr. Giles has here revealed how the ceremonies were in a lodge that was penetrated by the authorities, but they presumably are frequently changed.

San-ho means "Trinity" and symbolizes the great forces of nature, the sky and the earth, united with humanity.

San-ho-hui has in the past made several attempts at overturning the Manchu dynasty, and in the 1850s the society's Grand Master issued an order for general insurrection when Hung Hsiu-chuan^{*} raised the banner of revolt.

Several thousand members joined the Taipingers, and it looked like they might get their wishes fulfilled when Hung let himself be proclaimed emperor of China in the Ming dynasty's old capital of Nanking in 1852.

But as we know, their luck turned. The Manchu dynasty triumphed after a 16-year long civil war, which cost more people's lives than any other conflict in history.

When peace was restored, *Sang-ho-hui* was proscribed, and a general hunt for the society's members was initiated. Most of them fled to the Indonesian islands and especially the Straits Settlements, where the society is now thought to have its base of operations.

* A Christian convert, who believed himself called to establish a kingdom of peace on earth.

The other large political society, *Ko-lao-hui*, appeared in 1891 to perhaps be gaining considerable influence on its nation's future by the attempts made at involving the government in difficulties with the western powers through attacks on the missions.

Whatever the main motive might have been for this odd show of patriotism is still uncertain, since the authorities have not been able to get a single member to confess. But the intent must have been a hope for a dynastic overthrow or an anti-foreign movement.

The latter hypothesis is the most likely, since the members often have given evidence of their unfriendly disposition against Europeans. *Ko-lao-hui*, or "The Elder Brethren's Society," slogan is "China for the Chinese," and their home base is in Hunan; the province most antagonistic to foreigners.

Hunan lies just south of the Yangtze Kiang and is China's, and perhaps the world's, most fertile region. It is about as large as Norway with ten times the population. The level of education is quite high by Chinese standards, and the Hunanese are considered the most intelligent ethnic group of the Chinese race. Because of this, an overwhelming number of the empire's most trusted officials are recruited from Hunan.

They are appointed in all parts of China, and when they in old age return to their homes, they of course bring with them considerable knowledge and experience. And this experience hardly redounds to the Europeans' credit.

It was mostly Hunanese soldiers who defended Canton during the opium wars, since the majority of the Chinese

army also are from Hunan. Hunanese were also among the officials that the emperor ordered to open the peace negotiations – and the humiliating conditions will not be forgotten until they have been extirpated by the same kinds of weapons by which they were written.

It is therefore understandable that *Ko-lao-hui* is embraced with special sympathy in Hunan and the adjacent provinces along the shores of Yangtze Kiang.

The society is said to have been founded during the Taiping Rebellion, but, strangely enough, its members then fought under the banners of the Manchu dynasty – thus on the opposite side from *San-ho-hui*.

The imperial Generalissimo Tsêng Kuo-fan* and his brother, Tsêng Kuo-chüan, are said to have been among *Ko-lai-hui*'s founders. But at that time the main purpose of the society was to provide mutual help and support for its members.

If the members at that time had nurtured anti-dynastic sentiments, it would have been an easy matter for the highly esteemed Tsêng family to have marched on Peking after crushing the rebellion and supplanted the Manchu dynasty. Nor was there any lack of encouragement from other political associations, but the Tsêng brothers did not have the necessary ambition. Perhaps they also contemplated the doubtful benefits for the country of a dynastic overthrow, since China would probably then again have the Tartars, "the Scourge of Civilization," as enemies.

* Father of the late Marquis Tsêng, China's envoy to London and St. Petersburg.

Ko-lao-hui today has several hundred thousand members. The lay brothers are mainly of the military class and discontented elements of the lower levels of society, but among the leaders there are a number of influential officials, both civilian and military.

As long as Tsêng Kuo-chüan lived, *Ko-lao-hui* agreed to stay quiet – in return for a certain sum of money, it is said. But it also appears to be a personal regard for the old hero that has restrained the members, since disturbances of any kind, especially within Tsêng's own viceroyalty of Nanking, would have caused this high imperial official much distress.

But in 1889 the situation changed. The great patriot passed away and Liu Kun-yi, a former Grand Master, became vice-regent in Nanking. He had abandoned his ideals and lost the esteem of his comrades by resigning from the society in order to secure his path up the official ladder. His former brothers need not be considerate of this renegade, and when the viceroy shortly after his arrival dismissed a number of superfluous Hunanese soldiers and also stopped paying the pensions of several old officers who belonged to *Ko-lao-hui*, it was decided that the time had come to break loose.

In 1890 Liu was threatened with 3 things: Murder, rebellion, or destruction of the foreign missionaries' properties, if he did not change his behavior and pay a hefty indemnity. By destroying the mission stations, they primarily hoped to bring the viceroy severe troubles to cope with. Secondly, a conflict with the Western powers might result in the fall of the Manchu dynasty, and finally, the society could get revenge on the missionaries, which any patriot considered a worse pest than the grasshoppers.

But Liu of Nanking was not known to be easily frightened, and he did not care a fig for the threats. Shortly thereafter, his neighbor, the viceroy of Hunan, also followed his example with regard to military pensions, and with that the confrontational sentiment within *Ko-lao-hui* took over. Threat No. 3 was decided to be most suited for the purpose – and so the mission riots began in the spring of 1891.

Chapter Three

The outbreak

The destruction of the mission stations – The emperor's proclamation –
China's political posture.

The population along the shores of the Yangtze Kiang is among the proudest and most war-like elements in Chinese society, and they have always had difficulty tolerating the arrogant behavior of the foreigners.

As I have mentioned, the secret societies' recruits come especially from these regions of the empire. *Ko-lao-hui* thus could not have chosen a better stage for its activities.

There were storm warnings already in the beginning of the year, and when the Russian crown prince* visited China in April, many thought that something would happen. Among the cities that were honored by his presence were Hankow, which lies 1,500 kilometers above the mouth of the Yangtze Kiang. The society could hardly expect to get a better opportunity to set Russia and China at loggerheads, but the viceroy of Hunan, Chang Chi-tung, whose capital, Wuchang,

* Czar Nicholas II

lies on the opposite side of the river, got wind of *Ko-lao-hui*'s plans. He placed several gunboats in battle order in front of Hankow, and the crown prince's visit passed quite peacefully.

In early May the newspapers reported that there had been much excitement in the district surrounding the treaty port Wuhu caused by the old rumors about Catholic missionaries sticking out the eyes of several of their asylum children for use in costly medications.

How so practically inclined people as the Chinese middle class can be taken in by such nonsense is almost unexplainable, but I will only note that anti-Semitism, even in Anno Domini 1892, gave rise to equally outlandish rumors in Europe's most enlightened country, Germany.*

On May 12th the telegraph brought the first news about the outbreak of mission riots in Wuhu, and the riverboat "*Ella*," which arrived in Shanghai the following day, furnished more detailed reports of what had happened.

In the morning, when the ship approached Wuhu, which lies halfway between Hankow and Shanghai, it was stopped by the harbor master. This gentleman came on board dressed in pajamas and an overcoat, which he had grabbed and put on in the hurried confusion. Following his orders, "*Ella*" had steered towards the hulk of an old ship, where the entire European population had sought refuge. They related that the rabble had burned down the Jesuits' mission house, the children's asylum, the cathedral, and some buildings that belonged to the foreign customs officials. After wreaking this destruction, the mob had stormed the English consulate. The consul, Mr. Colin Ford, barely saved his life by fleeing down

* See "The Chinese and The Christian Mission" by this author.

to the customs office dressed in Chinese clothes, which one of the servants lent him.

Meanwhile the Customs Service personnel were called under arms. They wanted to attack the mob at once, but fortunately the customs director managed to hold them back. If shots had been fired, the enraged mob would presumably have sent everyone into the hereafter.

A small Chinese gunboat lay in the harbor, but the crew seemed to have little stomach for engaging the rioters. The captain contented himself with bringing a couple of the uprising's main leaders aboard ship under lock and key.

When a second riverboat came into the harbor, "*Ella*" left Wuhu and steamed downriver. On the way they met a small *sampan** in which two half-naked Jesuits had sought refuge. They were invited onboard, but the priests declined the offer, saying they wanted to wait and see how it would go.

"*Ella*" later met the English gunboat "*Inconstant*," which came quietly steaming upriver, despite the captain having been advised by telegraph that disturbances were expected. He probably thought there was no hurry, but this thinking later brought him some very sharp criticism in the press. At the same time, six Chinese gunboats ran upriver at full speed, and when these arrived at Wuhu, order was immediately re-established.

A couple of weeks passed. Then another piece of bad news came from Nanking, China's old capital. On the 25th of May the rabble, led by a member of *Ko-lao-hui*, attacked the Methodist girls' school, which was burned down. Fortunately, the missionaries had received warning from the authorities

* A small, flat-bottomed boat.

the previous day that an outbreak could be expected at any time, and they had therefore that evening left the city in the riverboat "*Kiang Yu*." The rioters also tried to burn down other mission buildings, but the viceroy's troops prevented further outrages.

From then on reports of destruction of mission stations came one after the other.

On June 1 the Catholics' buildings in Tan Yang were burned.

On June 4th the Protestant station in Wu Such was destroyed, and on this occasion 2 human lives were lost.

On June 8th the Catholic mission in Wu Such went up in flames, and on the same day the telegraph reported disturbances in Kiukiang and Chinkiang, but it did not develop into full-blown rampages in the two latter places, since the military managed to split up the mobs.

Fears of disturbances rose in Shanghai as well. Several nights in a row, posters were glued up on street corners, exhorting the Chinese populace to gather in crowds and "drive the barbarians into the sea." All the missionaries that lived in the surrounding area were encouraged to move into the city, and the volunteer corps, which had been so effective during the Taiping Rebellion was ordered up to stand guard.

The Europeans now began to feel apprehensive, and telegraphic requests were sent to all regions of East Asia for available warships. At the same time the embassies sent a very sharp note to *Tsung-li Yamen*^{*}, which had to be understood as an ultimatum. This had an immediate effect on the government in Peking, who realized that the situation

* The Chinese foreign ministry.

must be handled with more than usual force and speed if *Ko-lao-hui*'s intent – conflict between China and the major powers – was to be avoided.

A couple of days later the emperor issued a proclamation with the following content:

"Foreign missionaries came to China to teach the people the learning of the West. This is expressly stated in all the treaties which the empire has entered into with the foreign powers.

Some years ago, all Our viceroys were given strict instructions to protect the missionaries, who have now been in this country a long time, have taught and enlightened the people, and have always shown a peaceful disposition (??!!).

Why Our subjects now will kill them, burn their churches and hospitals, this We cannot understand.

The people have not thought of this themselves, but the secret societies, which constantly incite Our loyal subjects to disobedience and unrest. Their leaders have always spread scandalous rumors about the foreigners, so that they can have an opportunity to rob and plunder. These enemies of the state at all times entice loyal people to join their societies, and this will cause a lot of difficulties unless a stop is put to this activity.

These rabble-rousers shall be severely punished, since the security of the state is endangered. We therefore order all viceroys, Tartar generals, and governors to apprehend all members of the secret societies, try them in the courts, and execute them, if found guilty.

The foreigners' sermons are good for the Chinese people. The converted and their priests are good and peaceful people.

It is only evil individuals who have caused all this destruction and spread false rumors.

We most strictly command Our viceroys to issue proclamations warning the masses against giving credence to what members of the secret societies say. Those who put up insubordinate posters shall be found and punished. The property and life of missionaries and foreign merchants shall be protected at all times, and if you viceroys neglect your duties, you will immediately be dismissed. Similar manifestations have happened before, and the foreigners demanded an enormous sum in reparations.

We now command that you estimate the cost of the destructions as expeditiously as possible, and We forbid you to listen to the subordinate mandarins' excuses about not being able to bring in enough money to pay the foreigners' just demands.

Let everyone obey these words.

Kwang-Hsü

This year's 5th month and 7th day (13th of June)."

Of course, the emperor's proclamation was only a product of the ambassadorial pressure, a diplomatic homily, that the respective viceroys must interpret each in his own way.

The missionaries and a part of the English press still seemed surprised that threats had been used to produce such a document. But greater astonishment would likely have risen if the European embassies in St. Petersburg had demanded that the czar should issue a *ukase*, wherein the instigators of

unrest were condemned *en bloc* while foreigners were highly praised for their amicable disposition.

The document should therefore only be considered as more evidence that the Chinese government still would keep to its old program: Peace, peace at any cost, even if we Europeans may feel that it is not seemly for such a large nation's government to use diplomatic artifices to keep its enemies at bay.

The late *censor*, Admiral Peng Yü-lin, is well-known among Europeans in China. I will cite a little excerpt from his book, "Compliant Conduct *vis-à-vis* the Foreigners," which he published in the 1880s together with Hsü Ching-chu, who was China's ambassador in Washington 1884-86.

"Living with foreigners," wrote the ambassador, "can be likened to a chronic disease, which prevents us from doing what could be done under healthy conditions. China has suffered in many ways since the treaties were entered into. Compare the treaty between England and America and ours? — — But regrettably, we are helpless just now. It is no use to be speaking of war, while we are weakened after the Opium Wars and the Taiping Rebellion. It would only result in losing more territory and paying additional indemnities. Besides, there are secret societies in all the provinces. As long as we have peace with the foreigners, we can keep them at bay, but if we begin to quarrel with the foreigners, we may be sure they will take advantage of that and raise the banners of revolt. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we yield until we are sufficiently prepared for war, since the Western nations are not as high-minded as we, but always try to take advantage of each other. All of the big nations crave Chinese

territory. When they have got some ports, they want more. Mutual jealousies and international law holds them back; not the Chinese army and navy. The Europeans' jealousies and mutual infighting is an advantage that Heaven has given China, so that we can prepare ourselves. When everything is ready for war, then we will with a stroke take revenge for past injustices.

In the meantime, we ought to find out which nations really are friendly disposed toward China and enter into secret alliances with them."

These sentiments I think can be considered a rather correct representation of the Chinese government's policies at present, and it would be well for all parties, if the Western nations took them *ad notam* and guided their actions by them.

Chapter Four

An unexpected trip to Canton

Onboard the gunboat "*Li Fêng*" – The officers' speculations – An unexpected order – Up the Pearl River – History of Canton – The European settlement – A day in Canton – Street scenes – The 500 Wise Men's Temple – Marco Polo – Enterprising monks – Boyish pranks, not anti-Christianity – Visiting shops – Ivory ball – The 5 Stags' Temple – The water clock – The pirates capture of the steamer "*Namoa*" – Canton's place of execution – The examination stalls – On the old city wall.

A couple of miles northwest of Hongkong Island, by the mouth of the Canton River, there is a good anchorage, which the Europeans call Castle Peak Bay. Here, on the 25th of May 1891, one could see a pretty, white-painted gunboat lying at anchor with the imperial Chinese dragon flag under the gaff and open gun ports. This is "*Ling-Fêng*," one of the cruisers operated by the Customs Service*. Life seems to be taken at ease onboard. The Chinese sailors are occupied with painting and polishing, while the European officers stroll leisurely up and down on the quarterdeck in animated conversation with each other.

* See more about the Chinese Maritime Customs Service in "*Fra den kinesiske Mur til Japans Hellige Bjerg*" by this author. ["From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain"]

It is the mission disturbances that are being discussed. The latest newspapers have brought dismal reports about the public sentiment among the native population along the shores of the Yangtze Kiang. Perhaps "*Ling-Fêng*" may be ordered to run up there to take a look at the demonstrations? This had appeal for the officers, since they were all agreed that a change of scene would be desirable. The gunboat had spent the whole year around Hongkong Island crossing from one anchorage to the next, and this eventually became tiresome. In early spring a cruise down to Hainan to put a little fear into the life of the opium smugglers had been a possibility, but now the summer was half gone, so one might as well forget about that.

The steward comes and reports that lunch is ready, and the officers are about to step down into the cabin, when the quartermaster calls from the bridge that a steam sloop is approaching. The officers stop, make an about face, and go up to the bridge. Yes, here comes the Custom Service's steam sloop – and with news. None of us doubts that.

Oh, pardon me; I should first have introduced a couple of the cruiser's officers – two Norwegians from Horten*, Second-in-command H.G. Myhre and 3^d Lieutenant W. Coucheron-Aamot.

Perhaps orders to go north, hazarded the Chief, a nephew of the Archbishop of York. Our eyes lit up with hope, but that was partly disappointed, since when the Chief read the dispatch, which was shortly delivered to him by the steam sloop's pilot, we were informed that the destination this time fell a little short:

* Hometown of the Norwegian Naval Academy.

"Outbreak of hostilities against the foreigners is expected in Canton – go up there immediately."

This was the order from headquarters to general astonishment, since we had not the least idea that the Cantonese were brewing up anything of the kind. The general opinion was that *Ko-lao-hui* would confine its activities to the shores of the Yangtze Kiang.

In Hongkong, they had obviously received very serious telegrams about the situation in Canton; this was easy to infer, since one Chinese gunboat after the other came steaming along in our wake, and about 6 miles from Canton we were overtaken by a fast English gunboat, "Pigmy." But when the tide ebbed, the water became too shallow for the Englishman, and he had to go to anchor. "*Ling-Fêng*," however, did not draw so much water, so we still arrived first.

Peace and quiet seemed to rule over the entire metropolis; hardly a sound could be heard, except along the river's edge, where several Chinese gunboats were anchoring up in battle formation – the viceroy apparently had instructed them to be ready for anything.

The next day we were told that several members of *Ko-lao-hui* had come to Canton to rouse the people for a general massacre of *Fan Kwa-tse* – the foreign devils – but the old Viceroy Li Han-chang had fortunately received notice of the society's intent and had taken precautions. A proclamation had been immediately issued, wherein he warned his subjects against starting riots or insulting the Europeans. At the same time telegraph messages were sent to Hongkong for all Chinese gunboats available in the vicinity, and this had

helped a lot, since the Cantonese knew from experience that the seventy-two year old Li was not to be trifled with.

Ko-lao-hui seems to have miscalculated this time, but the plan was not all that dumb, since the Cantonese are not known for a friendly disposition toward the Western "barbarians." There are good reasons for this as can be shown by a short summary of the city's history.

Canton was visited by Europeans for the first time in the 16th century. King Emanuel of Portugal took the initiative. He outfitted an expedition at his own expense, and this succeeded in reaching China in the fall of 1517. A deputation was sent to Peking with many presents, and the emperor in return gave the Portuguese permission to settle in Canton and trade in tea and silks.

Some years later Queen Elizabeth sent a couple of ships in the same errand, but these shipwrecked in the Indian Ocean.

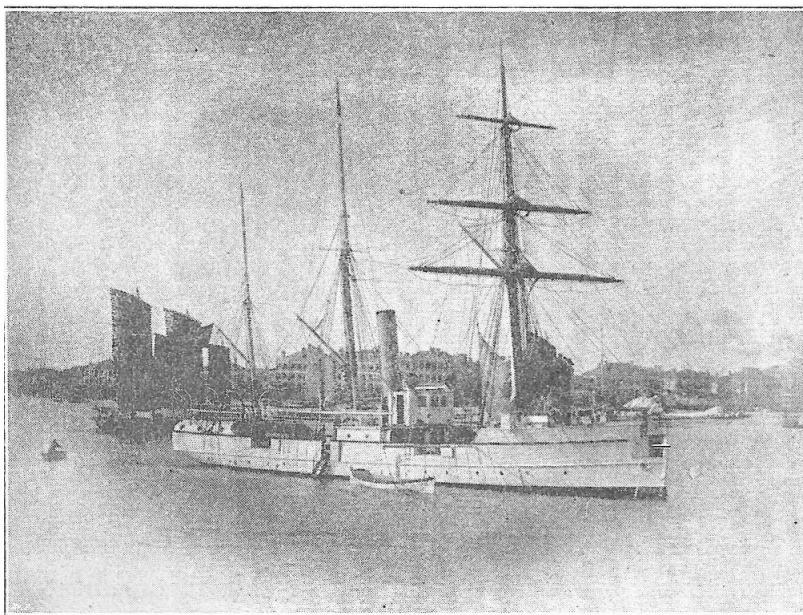
However, the Portuguese did not enjoy their trading monopoly for long. A swarm of Portuguese adventurers followed in the wake of the merchants and began to engage in piracy and slave trading on China's peaceful coast.

Rumors of their misdeeds reached Peking. The foreign merchants were soon viewed with suspicion, and when these on several occasions treated the Chinese with their usual arrogance and foolish condescension, the discontent flared up into flames, and on a dark September night the whole Portuguese colony was massacred. Ca. 1,200 sons of Lusitania perished on this occasion.

Then the Dutch came to try their luck, but just then China was shaken by a dynasty overthrow, when Shun Che con-

quered Peking. Southern China was not brought under the new rulers until many years later, and in the meantime it was impossible to do any trading.

When peace and security returned under Kang Hi*, the English had appeared, and the Dutch had to give way for the English genius for trade. In 1685 the East India Company got permission to trade at Canton, and now the China trade became significant for Europe. Export of tea and silk increased year after year – but so did importation of opium – this poison that later was to be forced onto the Chinese nation with bullets and bayonets.



"*Ling-Fêng*."

* Contemporary of Louis XIV, and the second emperor of the Manchu dynasty. The Kangxi emperor presumably is the greatest ruler China has had.

Anyone who has studied the Europeans' history in China cannot fail to be disgusted. It is deplorable that there should be a people, claiming to be followers of Jesus of Nazareth, who for the sake of mammon forced the plague of opium onto this ancient culture.



Emperor Kang Hi.
Reproduction of a drawing by the Jesuit Louis le Compte,
a member of Louis XIV's delegation in 1691.

China's statesmen saw the great dangers that approached from the ocean. They tried to keep out the Western civilization with its opium, murderous weapons, and its immorality, but the Chinese had to bow down before the English war power and promise to accept the poison in return for their invigorating tea at the conclusion of the 1st Opium War in 1842.

Several ports were "opened" for the trade. Canton was not large enough for the Englishmen's ruinous activity. The poison was now to be imported *en masse*, but the Chinese authorities still resisted. The power of an international treaty had not yet been made clear to them, and one difficulty after the other was placed in the way of the European trade.

Of course such defiant impudence should be punished. The merchants cried for their treaty rights – the rights that European traders were due according to the text of the treaties – and their cries were heard. In 1857 an English squadron under General Straubenzee and Sir Michael Seymour forced its way up to Canton, which was at the center of the resistance. The city had to surrender and was kept occupied until the end of 2nd Opium War in 1861.

As might be expected, the Cantonese have not forgotten this humiliation, nor the reason for it, but the Chinese are the world's most patient people – and they can wait.

*

*

*

The Europeans' bad conscience has got a quite telling expression by their choice of a site for their settlement in Canton. The colonists perhaps saw the specter of another

September night in their dreams, since in the two opium wars crimes had been committed several times worse than those the Portuguese had to atone for. But, of course, these new arrivals did not wish to share the fate of the Portuguese, and therefore they looked for a site secure against surprise attack.

Not far out from the place where the old European factories had been, there was a swampy little sandbar, and here it was decided to build the new settlement after the 2nd war. \$325,000 of the 21 million dollars that China had to pay in "war reparations" was used to transform the sandbar into an island, which was called *Sha-meen*.



Sha-meen.
(Shamian Island)

This little European domain is not overly large – only 1,000 meters long and 300 meters wide – but the settlement has proved sufficient for its cosmopolitan population to date.

Sha-meen is now a very pleasant place to live, but what may be more important for the colonists is that they here feel relatively safe from surprise attacks, since the island is separated from the mainland by a deep canal, and on the bridge over this, there is always a Chinese guard ready to call the alarm at least sign of a disturbance.

The soldiers' weapons are not of the most recent date, but their halberds, spears, and spiked maces should at least be sufficient to halt an unarmed mob until the authorities can send reinforcements.

Besides, there usually is a European or Chinese gunboat lying at anchor by Sha-meen, and ensured of a carefree existence, the Europeans have built grand mansions surrounded by beautiful gardens and leafy trees – almost a small earthly paradise that is constantly refreshed by cool breezes from the river.

In the city itself, the several mission societies have built impressive churches and hospitals, and it was probably these structures that *Ko-lao-hui* had intended to destroy first.

Canton, or *Kuangchow-fu*^{*}, as the Chinese call the capital of the Kaungsi and Kuantung provinces[†], naturally has much of interest to display, perhaps more than any other city in the Celestial Kingdom except Peking.

I naturally wanted to go ashore the day after our arrival, but the Chief said it was best to wait a little until the worst of

^{*} *Fu* is a suffix for all the great cities that form a *fu*, or county, by itself.

[†] These two provinces have a combined population of 29 million.

the trouble had subsided, and so I waited until Sunday morning. The other officers thought I risked being lynched by the mob, but I did not take notice of their dark predictions.

An English-speaking guide and 6 coolies with a sedan chair stood outside the "Sha-meen Hotel." I had arranged everything the evening before with the hotel manager. He had advised me to fill a pocket with 10-cent coins* – a little uncomfortable – but fortunately I had followed his advice, and *la caravane se mit en route*.

To walk alone through a city as large as Canton is, of course, impossible, especially when one cannot speak the language with any proficiency. Besides, the Chinese consider it beneath their dignity to walk if they can afford to be carried. They do not think much of the barbarians, and it would be still less, if they saw a European walk on foot through the streets unaccompanied.

He would be viewed with suspicion, and therefore all visitors choose to be led by a guide, who can answer all the questions about where the foreigner came from, where he is going, what is the purpose of his visit, etc.

In addition, the guide knows all the places worth seeing and at the same time plays a role as a living encyclopedia. He is a blessing for all who are short on time. Under his guidance one will see more in a day than otherwise in a month, and this reliable *cicerone* takes only a very moderate fee for his trouble.

Ah Po – my guide – had a whole packet of recommendations from ambassadors down to tourists, and I felt as

* [\$HK, roughly 1/10 \$US – almost certainly so when referring to WC-A's personal expenses in China, but possibly \$US otherwise]

secure in his company as if I sat in the cabin aboard "*Ling-Fêng*."

Some of the most interesting scenes that Canton can offer foreigners is the colorful, unfamiliar street life in the innumerable cobblestone paved streets. These are all furnished with high-flown poetic names, painted with black characters on the corners or above the massive ironclad gates that bar access for unauthorized persons at night.

With laughter and song, shouts and cries, an uninterrupted stream of living creatures flow by our sedan chairs. There is not much room between the house-rows, only 4 – 6 meters, but the Chinese are a courteous people and slip through without minding an occasional bump in the back.

It is worse, when one meets another procession, since then the coolies must employ all their dexterity to pass by each other, and the pedestrians must press up against the building walls as best they can.

The Chinese love processions and parades, and they take advantage of any opportunity to have one. It may be a local saint that is to be honored, or some mandarin or other, who must pay a visit to his superiors or inspect some official project.

We met with such a gentleman, just as we were about to turn around a corner. Honor to him that is honor due, I thought, and gave my bearers orders to stop and back up a few steps to avoid a collision. That His Excellency would not hold up for my sake was quite understandable, especially since he had an honor guard of around a half hundred men.

First came some drummers, who did their best to inform the people in the street that one of the nation's important

personages was about to pass by. Better make room in time. Behind these ear-deafening percussionists followed several men carrying red wooden tablets with gilded text, which enlightened the crowd about the official's name and rank. Then came the mandarin, sitting proud and superior in his sedan chair, while he looked down at the "barbarian" with an ironic smile.



A street in Canton.

Behind the sedan chair followed again a flock of servants – dirty coolies, which are hired for the occasion and dressed in the most garish liveries. One might almost be tempted to believe that these poor tatterdemalions only were included in the procession to call attention to how superior the elegant, silk-clad mandarin is over other mortals.

These processions with all the forlorn finery always appear a little ridiculous to Europeans, and though I had become rather accustomed to such scenes, I could not refrain from a little smile.

We then again move slowly forward in the throng of people. Chinese women with artistically coiffed hair, wide trousers, and embroidered blouses trip carefully along on their bound, crippled doll's feet. Half-naked coolies run away with heavy burdens balanced on slender, elastic bamboo pipes. Human hands and shoulders generally are the only means of transportation in the narrow streets. All possible kinds of goods pass by. The coolies here in the south are not inconvenienced by too much clothing, so there is opportunity to admire their magnificent muscles and sinews, but the crooked backs regrettably all too often bear witness of overwork, incessant wear and tear, that is rewarded with a handful of rice and an early grave.

Old, venerable men with grey-white, thin pigtails stroll solemnly back and forth outside their homes – all passersby respectfully give way for in no place on earth is old age given more respect than in China.

Meanwhile we note the clean-shaven Buddhist monks with an anything but intelligent appearance. These *padres* of the East are easily recognized by their long, wide robes,

which are far from notable for their cleanliness. And that is probably also so for their hearts, or they would not be so generally despised. No nation has less regard for monks and priests than the Chinese, and foreigners immediately notice this by the contemptuous looks thrown their way by the populace.

The numbers of people in Canton's main streets are immense, and when all these living beings move back and forth with more or less haste, it always seems like the passageway may be closed by some accident or other, and this probability is amplified by the sight of the prodigious packs of dogs that constantly cross the pedestrians' paths.

Therefore it is agreeable to sit in a sedan chair when visiting a Chinese city. One feels unaffected by the Babylonian confusion below, and at the same time it gives good opportunity to study the diverse nuances of the street scene.

The main streets are so full of shops that we seem to be passing by a continuous shopping mall. Right and left, in front, and above our heads, an unending variety of signs in assorted forms and colors can be seen. They are generally made from lacquered wood and endowed with large gilt or colorful Chinese characters that announce the kind of wares sold and the name of the business. The signs also frequently bear some inscription or other that often strike us Europeans as droll.

Outside a restaurant, we thus see a sign that advises customers that "Here no credit is given – we have learned from sad experience." A hat maker advertises "In this store buyer and seller enjoy mutual advantages," etc., etc.

The owner's name is never shown on the signs. When Ah Ling or Sung Wu opens a store, they are not so prosaic as to name it just Ah Ling or Sung Wu & Co. No, a poetic turn must be given to even the most prosaic, such as, f. ex., a barbershop that is called "The Hall of Heavenly Light." For what reason is not known, since it is both dark and cheerless inside.

Speaking of the signs, it may also be mentioned that almost every building wall has a broad, red sheet of paper with 4 characters written or printed on it that in translation reads: "May the 5 blessings rest over this house." A charming custom that I hope will be better related to reality than the inscription over an opium dealer's door: "May health and good fortune follow all who pass over this doorstep."

The colorful signs are hung everywhere there is room for them, and sometimes the larger shops even have protruding corbels of carved and gilded wood so that even more signs can be displayed.

All this brilliant coloring and gilding give the narrow streets a lively, interesting character and provide a frame for the unstoppable stream of humanity.

The money changers' shops, which are recognized by the long strings of copper coins that are hung up by the entrances, are among the most noticeable. Outside the apothecaries there are large glass lanterns, some of which display colored characters that inform the customers that the medicines are prepared with the greatest care, of the best materials, etc., etc., and instead of our names, such as "The Eagle," "The Crown," "The Swan," and so on, the Chinese apothecaries use "The Home of Health," "Healing for All," and similar names.

We pass through the "Street of the Ten Thousand Beauties," "Mercy and Love," "Eternal Gratitude," and then finally stop outside *Wa Lan-tse*, or "Temple of the 500 Wise Men." Canton is the city of temples *par excellence*. At present there are around 800 of all possible varieties and sizes. *Wa Lan-tse* is one of the oldest – 1,300 years it is said.

Inside the temple yard a crowd of people have gathered – but few are devout to judge by appearances. We must almost believe we are in a market place, since the whole space is taken up by a mass of small shops with the most diverse merchandise.

While we stand there looking around at this Babylonian disorder, a clean-shaven Buddhist monk comes smiling up to our guide, and when this gentleman has been given a full explanation of the reason for our visit, he leads us into a pavilion.

In the middle of the floor stands one of the most magnificent examples of Chinese sculptural art, a seven-level marble pagoda that the emperor Kien Lung donated to *Wa Lan-tse*^{*}. The monument is 20 meters high and has numerous inscriptions.

From the pavilion the monk leads us into a great hall, where the 500 gilded terracotta statues, which have given the temple its name, are displayed. The statues are life-size representations of China's most capable and famous men from antiquity up to the beginning of the present century. All the heads are hatless and clean-shaven – with one exception.

* Kien Lung, the Kangxi emperor's grandson, ruled with wisdom and force from 1735 to 1795..

Who might this presumptuous person be? A broad-brimmed hat half hides a face with an anything but Chinese visage; a Roman nose and a large handlebar moustache below!



Temple of the 500 Wise Men.

It is none other than the famous traveler, the Venetian Marco Polo, who has been found worthy of being included in the Buddhist temple's pantheon, a place of honor that many of the sons of Heaven would have paid millions for. As I have mentioned before, Marco Polo was the first European to give the West a small glimpse of the Chinese empire's greatness. He visited China twice, and on his last journey stayed several years at Kublai Khan's court in Peking.

Polo later undertook several journeys as the Mongol emperor's envoy to Persia and India and on his return was showered with honors and riches. The Venetian left the country, but his memory has been preserved through the centuries, and gratitude for his services has found a delightful expression by his statue being included in this temple among the nation's greatest men.

While I stand there viewing the statues, all the entrances are closed as upon a signal and a smiling monk appear at each and begs the "barbarians" for alms.

A ten-cent piece for viewing the 500 wise men!

Here you are.

Ten cents for the pagoda! Ten cents for wax candles and incense! And so on.

I had to admire the monks' enterprising spirit, when I finally came out into free air with 10 less of the silver coins, and a thank you flew to the hotel manager in Sha-meen, who had advised me to fill my pockets with "open Sesames." Though 5-cent pieces would probably have done as well.

Outside the temple I met with the sole hostile sign from the people during the whole trip. Some street urchins found great entertainment in pelting me with orange peel as I

entered the sedan chair. Woe to me, if I had lost my temper! The mass of people outside the temple would probably have made short work of me, and the European Chinese-haters might perhaps have had occasion to write about "Christian persecution," or something of the kind, since all affronts to a foreigner are attributed to persecution of Christians in the European press.

No, let us keep the name of Christ out of it as much as possible. It is not their religion that causes harsh feelings toward the Europeans, but their barbaric behavior on so many occasions.

Instead of showing annoyance over the boys' orange peels, I threw a handful of silver coins out to the worst of the little rascals. It worked. There was a wild free-for-all for the 10-centers, and we escaped unnoticed.

After this little intermezzo, I visited several shops and made some small purchases. The shopkeepers in Canton do a lively trade with the tourists and therefore are very courteous to the Europeans, who always pay higher prices than the natives.

And the Chinese merchants generally show a very independent disposition. Even if an exorbitant price is demanded, it does not necessarily do any good to try to dicker, as with a Jew. The shopkeeper may simply pack the object up again and set it back in its place.

Store and workshop are often connected, and I take the opportunity to get a quick insight into the fabrication of the many art objects, which are exported to Europe. Thus I was able to study the creation of the interesting Chinese "ivory

ball," which consists of 10 concentric carved balls, one inside the other, at an ivory trader's shop.

Many people have strained their brains trying to find out how such things are made. At least I did, when I on my first ocean cruise was talked into buying an example by an itinerant curiosity hawker. I thought then that perhaps the balls were originally carved as half-spheres and glued together with cement, one outside the other, but an attempt to separate them with boiling water was not successful. The balls faithfully stuck together. I then did not think any more about the curio until I now, after several years had passed, stood in this Cantonese ivory trader's shop and was offered another sample.

"Please, could I see how it was made?"

"Certainly, with pleasure; several boys are working on them in the shop."

And here is the solution to the mystery. A piece of ivory is turned into a perfect sphere. Then the ball is bored through with a conical instrument, such that the holes meet in the center. When that is done, the worker inserts a thin piece of steel with a sharp, bent point into each hole, but not farther than that the inner ball's radius is left. By picking and scraping repeatedly through the several holes the first ball is eventually loosened, and now it is easy to smooth and decorate its surface by bringing the several areas forward to the opening of the conical holes. Then they continue with the second ball, the third, and so on, and the *objet d'art* is done.

These ivory balls are mainly made for sale to Europeans and find a ready market among the innumerable tourists that annually visit Canton.

We again seat ourselves in the sedan chairs and continue our inspection of the great city's points of interest. First we make a flying visit to the "Temple of the 5 Stags."

According to an old folktale, the 5 spirits they believe govern the 5 elements, Earth, Fire, Metal, Water, and Wood, visited Canton in the form of stags and bringing with them all earthly blessings. But as soon as the spirits touched the ground, they were turned into stone, and in that way the blessings came to rest over the city forever.

A temple was later built over the stone stags, and here they are displayed today, but we must admit that these rudely carved blocks of stone stir up some doubts as to the originals' divine origin. If so, a very primitive species of deer must have existed when the spirits made their descent to Earth.

The legend has also added one more name to the many others that its inhabitants have given the city. Canton is often called "The City of the 5 Stags." The temple also had other marvels to exhibit. Among these, we may mention a colossal imprint of Buddha's foot and an enormous bell that warns the inhabitants when some disaster or other approaches Canton.

This museum of popular superstitions is thoroughly interesting and well worth the 10 cents, which one of the priests demanded for the showing.

A short distance from the temple there is a rock outcrop on which a tall watchtower has been erected. On the top floor, a kind of water clock is displayed, which for several centuries has informed the Cantonese whether they were ahead of or behind their time.

It is very ingeniously constructed. Four large copper vessels are stepped one above the other. The top one is filled

to the rim with water, and through a small opening the water slowly trickles down into the second, from there into the third, and finally into the fourth. The last vessel is equipped with an indicator rod that sticks up through a hole in the lid.

As the bottom vessel is filled, the rod rises upward and shows the time quite accurately. The watchman calls out the hours and displays them on a huge board on the tower's platform. The water is bailed up into the top vessel twice a day, and is replaced once a month. In these intervals they burn a kind of fuse with exact markings by which they can determine the length of the interval and adjust the height of the indicator rod. The second vessel was hit by an English bullet during the siege of 1858. The damage could fortunately be repaired, and the vessel is now adorned with a belt around the middle.

*

*

*

The populace in Li Han-chang's viceroyalty has never been known for its devotion to law and order, quite to the contrary, and there are good reasons for that. As a border province, Kwangtung seems to be especially favorable for growth of piracy.

When the law enforcement authorities make it too hot for the scoundrels, they only have to withdraw across the border – or take a pleasure cruise down the Pearl River to the island of Hongkong, which was surrendered to the English in 1842. Under the English *habeas corpus* act, the pirates can sleep safely onboard their *junks* in Hongkong's spacious harbor. According to a Chinese statistic, the English colony shelters a couple of thousand of these modern day Vikings. Almost

daily one or another is in court suspected of a less than reputable lifestyle. But they usually are let go again – lack of contestable evidence.

Thus a lot of the pirates that captured the English steamer "*Namo*a" in December 1890 were caught, but then released. The Englishmen on the jury demanded positive proof, and that it is difficult for the European courts in China to get, since an oath sworn before the "barbarians," or even before their fellow countrymen, has little or no meaning.

Piracy in the final years of the 19th century is a rare thing and especially capture of large steamships. It therefore may be of interest to hear a little more about this event.

Early in the morning of 11 December we saw the coastal steamer "*Namo*a" steer into the Hongkong harbor. The engine was probably damaged or the axle broken, it was surmised by several people, who had seen "*Namo*a" leave the day before on its usual weekly run to Amoy. But later in the morning it ran like a grassfire across the island and the harbor that the steamship had been attacked and seized by pirates the evening before just a few miles out of Hongkong. The captain, a quartermaster, and a passenger had been killed. The pirates had abandoned the ship in the night after having removed most things of value.

The report of this tragedy struck everybody, Europeans and Chinese, as very surprising, since this kind of event had been thought to belong to the distant past. The days when the Malaysians and the Portuguese competed for the doubtful honor of being Asia's worst freebooters had gone quite out of mind.

"*Namoa*" left Honkong the morning of December 10th, loaded with general cargo and 255 European and Chinese passengers. Among the Chinese were a number of emigrants, returning from California and the Straits Settlements with their hard-earned savings.

This became known to the pirate band, which had their base in the harbor, and they immediately laid plans for capturing "*Namoa*." 50 – 60 of the villains came onboard as passengers without arousing the least suspicion. When the steamship at noon had got about fifty nautical miles out from Hongkong, and all the other passengers were eating lunch, the band rushed in four detachments up on the deck and occupied all the entrances down to the cabins and the engine room. The pirates were all armed with revolvers and sabers and were led by a tall, stately Chinese, who some passengers took for a wealthy merchant.

Stinkpots were thrown down unto the salon and several shots fired through the skylight over one of the cabins where the 2nd machinist and the 2nd mate had just sat down to eat. One of the bullets hit the machinist in the arm, and he immediately ran out of the cabin and hid in the engine room. The 2nd mate, who had the keys to the vessel's strong-room, then was taken prisoner.

The pirates seemed to have the most exact knowledge of how the ship worked. The prisoner was taken down to the strong-room and the door opened. But here they were disappointed – not a cent! This was a rare coincidence for this trip. The ship usually carried large sums, and the pirates knew that.

While this investigation took place, the tragedy continued elsewhere on the ship. One of the passengers, a German by name of Petterson, sat eating his lunch on the aft deck, since he felt a little queasy and did not want to go down into the salon with the others. The villains, who feared he would fight back, shot him down on the spot.

The leader, who spoke English, called for the captain, Mr. Pocock, and said he intended to rob all the passengers of their valuables, and asked him to come up on deck so that the affair could be arranged amicably. The captain complied with the request, since the leader promised that not a hair would be touched on his head. But Captain Pocock had hardly come up the ladder before one of the gang fired his revolver into his breast. The wounded barely had strength to run back down and into his quarters, where he expired after a short while.

The passengers now ran into their cabins and locked the doors. The pirates tried to drive them out by shooting through the skylight and throwing stinkpots into the salon. When they saw that these efforts were fruitless, they sent the captive mate down to the salon with a message that if they all went quietly to the captain's quarters and stayed there, they would not be further molested. All the passengers complied with the appeal, but they first had to surrender all their valuables.

Meanwhile, the leader's orders were being carried out elsewhere on the ship. A Malaysian quartermaster, who had stood watch on deck, was shot and thrown overboard. The 1st machinist, who also sat at table when the attack began, at once ran to the captain's cabin without being stopped, since it was the pirates' intent to gather them there anyway. The 3^d mate, who stood on the bridge, jumped down to the deck and

tried to reach the engine room. He made it, but on the way got shot in the arm. The 2nd and 3^d machinists were also down there, and all three hid under the boilers. The pirates therefore again sent the captured mate down to tell them that they could safely come up and go to the captain's cabin.

When all the Europeans were collected there, the door was nailed shut and four sentries stationed outside. These continually clicked their revolvers and rattled their sabers to let the prisoners know what their lot would be if they did not stay quietly inside. After disarming the Europeans, the pirates drove the Chinese passengers into the salons and posted a strong guard by the doors.

They were now in full possession of the ship. A couple of the scoundrels took command of the bridge, and the firemen were forced to carry on their duties under peril of death.

The ship continued on its old course until about five o'clock in the afternoon. It then turned and steered toward some islands, where the leader let the anchor drop.

Meanwhile the pirates proceeded to bring all valuable objects up on deck. The crew had to do the work, while the victors contented themselves with strolling up and down with cocked revolvers. When the anchor fell, the lanterns were taken in, and a couple of powerful blasts made from the ship's horn. The signal was immediately answered from six *junks* by lighting blue lights. Everything seemed to have been planned in minute detail. The *junks* came alongside the ship, and the offloading began.

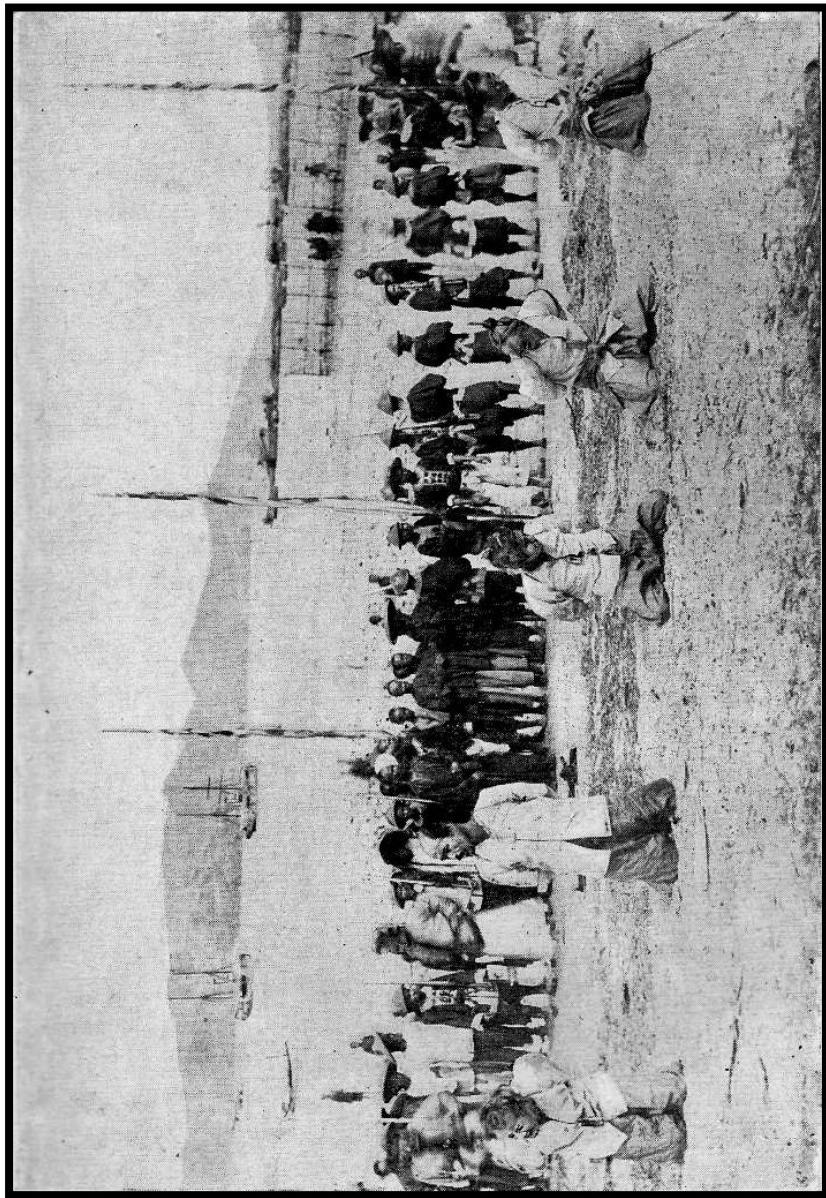
Though they could have continued the plundering all night, only the most valuable items were taken. The pirates probably thought it not worthwhile to run any unnecessary

risk, now that everything had gone so well. But they could also have been well satisfied with their booty, which is said to be worth around 50,000 dollars.

When the *junks* were loaded, the pirates destroyed the anchor winch, knocked holes in the lifeboats, and made the stokers extinguish the fires. They were thus quite ensured against pursuit, and then left "*Namo*a" about nine o'clock after having "presented" the stokers with 200 dollars. These immediately ran up from the engine room and informed the locked up Europeans that the pirates were gone. The door was broken open, and they were again free after 8 hours imprisonment in the cabin together with the dead captain. What they had suffered during this time may be easier imagined than described.

The officers at once set the crew to making the ship ready. The anchor chain was cut, and when steam was up again, the course was set for Hongkong, and at 8 in the morning the ship was moored in the harbor.

The capture of "*Namo*a" is one of the most daring and best planned enterprises of its kind. For a long time it also looked like the crime would go unpunished. An English gunboat was sent out to find the pirates lair, but of course in vain, since almost two days passed with formalities before the boat could leave. First the governor must send an order to the commanding admiral, then he to the gunboat's captain, etc., a manner of proceeding that those not experienced in the ways of government bureaucracy did not take kindly to. The viceroy of Canton also sent out a gunboat, but since this first had to come down the river, it took too long for it to reach the scene of the crime. The investigation proceeded with energy



Execution of the "Namo" pirates.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

from both the English and the Chinese side. But some of the pirates were still so brash as to return to Honkong, where they felt themselves relatively safe. However, as I have mentioned before, a couple of them were arrested, but released again due to lack of evidence.

Unfortunately (for them) some members of the gang made a smaller raid in Chinese territory a couple of months later, and then their luck ran out. They were brought to Canton, and a little torture got one of the scoundrels to talk. He confessed that he had participated in the capture of "*Namoa*" and gave up the names of several of his brothers in crime. Torture may seem barbaric, but here it proved well applied, since where the English jury in Hongkong had failed, the Chinese system of justice succeeded. Eventually several more of the pirates were captured, and about three months after the catastrophe, 19 of them were executed on a single day in the vicinity of Hongkong, and a crowd of Europeans observed this bloody epilogue with evident satisfaction.

When Li Han-chang was appointed viceroy in Canton in 1888, the whole province was in total confusion. The feud with the French about Tongking had thoroughly bled the finances, and in addition, thousands of desperate men, whom the war had made homeless, poured out over this China's wealthiest province, where the bandit's trade had always proved profitable.

Li's competent predecessor, Chang Chih-tung, regarded the situation in Kwantung as so tangled and difficult that he petitioned the government in Peking to transfer him, a request that was also granted. The seventy-year old Li Han-chang then got the difficult task of restoring order. The new viceroy began with an iron hand to clean the Augean stables and succeeded. Property has never been more secure in this border province.

But it is easily understood that this result could not have been achieved with any particular mildness. Scores of robbers have had to atone with their lives for their misdeeds, and it is the rumor of these frequent executions that has given many Europeans the impression that Li is a modern Nero. But this is a misconception. In the first place, a bloodthirsty Chinese would be an oddity, since all who have studied the Chinese national character know that its defining characteristic is just revulsion against violent acts of all kinds – a pacifism that borders on apathy. In the second place, under normal circumstances, no sentence of death can be executed in China without the emperor's approval. Just as many formalities are required for making a murderer a head shorter here as in Europe. It is nonsense to call Li a Nero. One must remember that a Chinese viceroy is personally responsible for his

subjects' life and security, and the energetic old gentleman probably thought it better to ensure these benefits than to let the province be terrorized by a few hundred bandits.

It was of course interesting to see Canton's place of execution, this battlefield of peace, where so much criminal blood has flowed. But my expectations of seeing something extraordinary were let down. We arrived to a rectangular area not more than 15 meters long and 4 – 5 meters wide.

No one would find anything special about the appearance of the place. The whole area was covered by a kind of clay pottery that farmers and laborers use as fireplaces. An ordinary place for drying pottery is probably what all who happen to pass by would think. There are no traces to indicate that this spot has drunk the blood of so many criminals.

No, here Death would deprive both martyrs and heroes of any romantic aura for everything looks so drab and prosaic. The place also really is used for drying pottery, which is only stowed away when there are executions taking place. The pottery workers must still have strong – very strong – nerves. My guide pointed to a jar with a lid:

Would I like to see? The head of the last executed murderer?

"No, thank you," I replied, since experience had taught me that there *are* things that there is no benefit in seeing unless absolutely necessary.

I especially remember one occasion when I came to regret my curiosity. It was in Antwerp. Every corner should be visited, especially such places where need and misery stared out of every hole, for there I thought I would find the best sources for the study of humanity. In my wanderings, I also

visited the city's new hospital, and here I had an opportunity to spend a few hours with a poor Norwegian sailor, who had had both his legs crushed. I went through the whole hospital; only *la Morgue* was left. My courteous *cicerone* looked questioning at me.

Yes, of course, I must see this too!

The sight was straight-out sickening. There were a score dead bodies, stretched out on tables, while cold streams of water were sprayed over them to delay decomposition.

Oh, how much misery and how much suffering, what tragedies were contained in this room! My strong nerves almost gave way in the dimly lit hole. Out, out, into fresh air!

To chase away the memory of this frightful scene I went to the circus in the evening, but this experiment miscarried entirely. When I saw the horses and the beautiful riders, the dead bodies from *la Morgue* intruded on the scene; some limping on one foot without arms, others with exposed viscera. I had to leave the circus and hurry back to the hotel.

The next day I had a violent headache, and it was a long time before the impact of *la Morgue* dimmed.

This episode again came to mind, when I stood on the place of execution in Canton, and therefore I replied with a straightforward no. A rotten head was not an interesting sight, but I would like to meet the executioner.

No problem.

My guide knocked on a door, and the man inside immediately came out to us. Another disappointment. Only a common coolie in blue cotton clothes. He appeared quite peaceful and gentle, this executioner, despite the broad, shining sword, which he showed me for 10 cents.

How many had he killed with that?

"500," replied the fellow with a smile.

But this number must be divided by at least 100 to come close to the truth. To tell a tall tale for Europeans is a source of general amusement for the Chinese. Besides, the famous English journalist Henry Normann had just published an article in *Pall Mall Gazette*, wherein he describes purchasing the executioner's sword for just 5 dollars. Maybe the man thought he might sell me one too, since swords that have seen the blood of 500 people are not often for sale.

Unfortunately I do not collect such relics, and the fellow could keep his murderous weapon for further use.

*

*

*

Once more we step into our sedan chairs, and the next visit is to Canton University, or rather the Examination Halls, since universities in the European sense are not to be found in China. The students study on their own, or with the aid of private tutors.

Anyone, who knows a little about Chinese culture, knows the great esteem that learning enjoys among all classes of society. Examinations must be passed, if one is to rise above the masses. Without learning, it is difficult to advance up the bureaucratic ladder. Promotions primarily depend on how many examinations the prospective candidate has passed, and, of course, also if he has been able to practice his knowledge in subordinate positions.

Reading the Peking Gazette,^{*} one gets a good idea of this singular learning worship. The reports from the province governors mention men up in their seventies, and even nineties, who with the courage of desperation have fought throughout their lives to add one more degree to their names before they succumb to the coldness of the grave. And if they do not succeed, sometimes, the emperor may award their persistence with an honorary degree.

The first examination is held in the largest cities in the province. Three years later, all the students who passed the exam are gathered again in the capital of the province to compete for the title *Kiu-jen*, or the second examination degree.

Though one must say that Canton's fathers have been rather too economical with space for streets and public parks, they have, on the other hand, shown a lot of interest for the examination candidates' arena, which has an area of around a half English square mile.

After having passed through the "Gate of Righteousness," we come into a long tree-lined street with a tall tower at the far end. Here the patron saint of knowledge is exhibited for 10 cents. One more gate and we enter a huge open plaza, as smooth as a floor and paved with concrete. A large part of this square is covered by a roof resting on tall pillars. To let light through to below it was covered with small panes of glass – I thought, but the guide informs me that it is made with prepared oyster shells. Heaven knows how many of these creatures gave their life to cover this giant vaulting?

* *King Pau* – the world's oldest newspaper. At present it is published in 3 editions daily.

We are then led in to the Examination Halls through the "Dragon Gate."

Is it a cattle market?, one may be tempted to ask, since as far as the eye can see there is only an unending row of small brick buildings that look suspiciously like stalls.

No, not quite; at least it is human cattle that are housed here – the candidates' residence while answering the exam questions.

Each of these cells, or stalls, is 1½ meter long, 2 meters high, and 1 meter wide. There is no furniture inside at present, but when the candidates stream into Canton from all the provincial towns in October, each will have a small table, a stool, and a brazier for warmth and cooking. The coziness of our Western university environment is not felt here. But the Chinese find, as so many also in the West, that the mind works best when the comforts of life are sparse.

The whole back side of the cell is open, or rather non-existent, since, as stated above, the brick structure resemble a cattle stall to a tee. These "cozy" study cubicles are built in long, straight rows, 300 in each, and the last stall is numbered 12,000, which is as high as the number of competing candidates can reach.

This cell system makes all cheating impossible, since the students' clothes are searched before they enter the cells, and when they are seated and ready to work, they can only see their neighbors' front walls. The candidates are furnished writing materials and the subjects for dissertation early in the morning. The poor wretches are not permitted to leave their prison until their assignment is complete. The next morning they are locked in again, and thus it continues until the

examination is over. It is not a rare occurrence, that the proctors find a candidate unconscious in his cell, when the exertion has been too strong or the nerves too weak.

I will not go into the Chinese examination system in more detail, but only state that it is of far-reaching political influence and one of the major reasons for the empire's unequalled cohesion. All Chinese, with only a few exceptions, are allowed to compete, and if he was born to rule, the examinations show the way. The Chinese officials forms China's reigning aristocracy, appointed by the people to govern, not by right of birth, as in so many countries, but by talent.

*

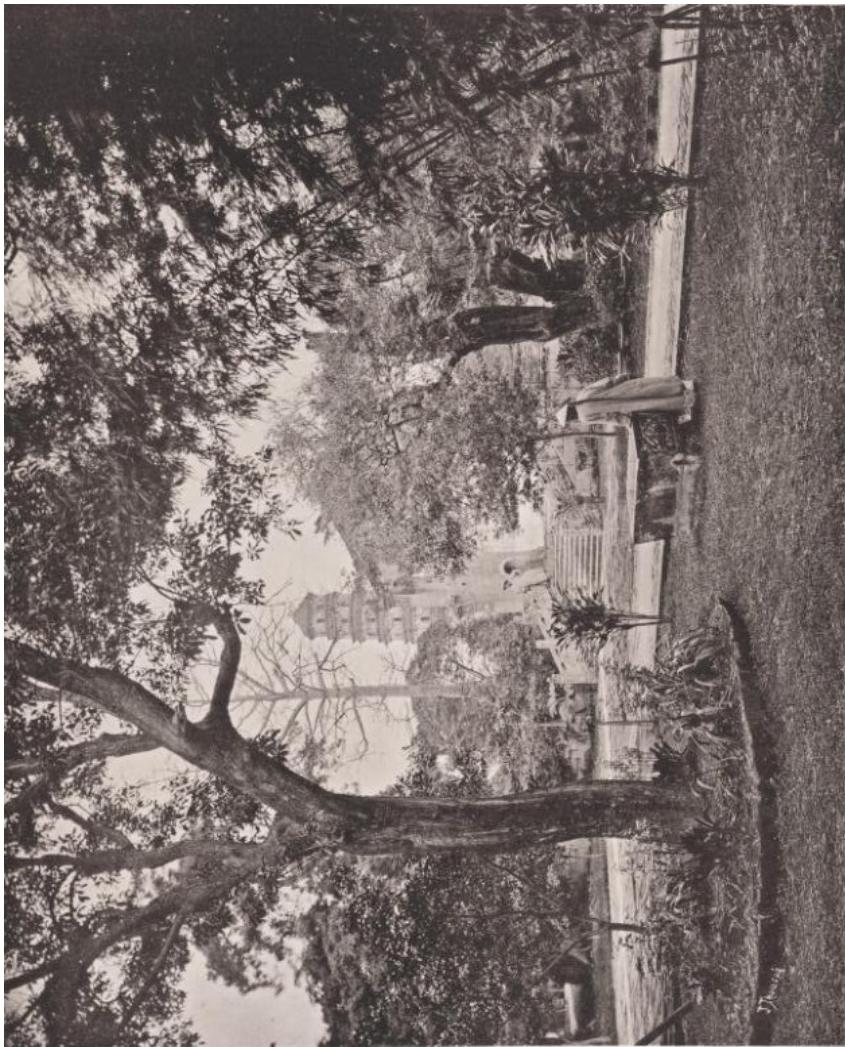
*

*

As in all large Chinese cities, there is a special quarter in Canton, where the higher officials have their palaces and offices.

From the Examination Halls, we continued on to the viceroy's residence. Through a lovely decorated gate, we enter a large, open square surrounded by venerable majestic trees, which form a sun-screened avenue right up to the viceroy's reception hall.

I would have liked to pay the elderly Li a visit, but since I lacked a letter of introduction from the consul, I had to be content with a view into the open veranda in the hope that the powerful lord would be among the mandarins who sat there drinking tea. But Ah Po could not point him out, and so we turned around the corner of the palace and entered an extraordinarily beautiful park filled with luxuriant tropical



The viceroy's park.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

vegetation. Here and there were small ponds covered with lotus plants, which were just coming into bloom.

Everything looks so peaceful and quiet in here; a little paradise, where Canton's old viceroy may rest a little after his heavy governmental burdens. To make the idyll even more perfect, numerous gazelles and small deer run about while they now and then stop and look at the visitors with their large, trusting eyes with not least sign of fear. To show how tame the animals are, the park's attendant taps on a small clay bowl filled with rice, and a couple of small deer at once run up to him and begins to eat from the bowl.

In the back of the park stands a venerable, moss bedecked pagoda. It is thought to be one of the oldest in China and was built in the 6th century by the emperor Wu Ti.

I would have liked to spend the rest of the afternoon in this romantic environment and just wander around in the leaf-filled avenues among the brilliant flowers of the tropical south, but Ah Po had a different idea; there still was much to see, and so I had to reluctantly leave the viceroy's wonderful park and resume our tour through the metropolis.

Now we are approaching the other end of the thousand-year old wall, which surrounds all of Canton. Just as the bearers begin to step up to the ramparts, my guide gives a sign to stop.

Would I like to see the oldest Mohammedan mosque in China?

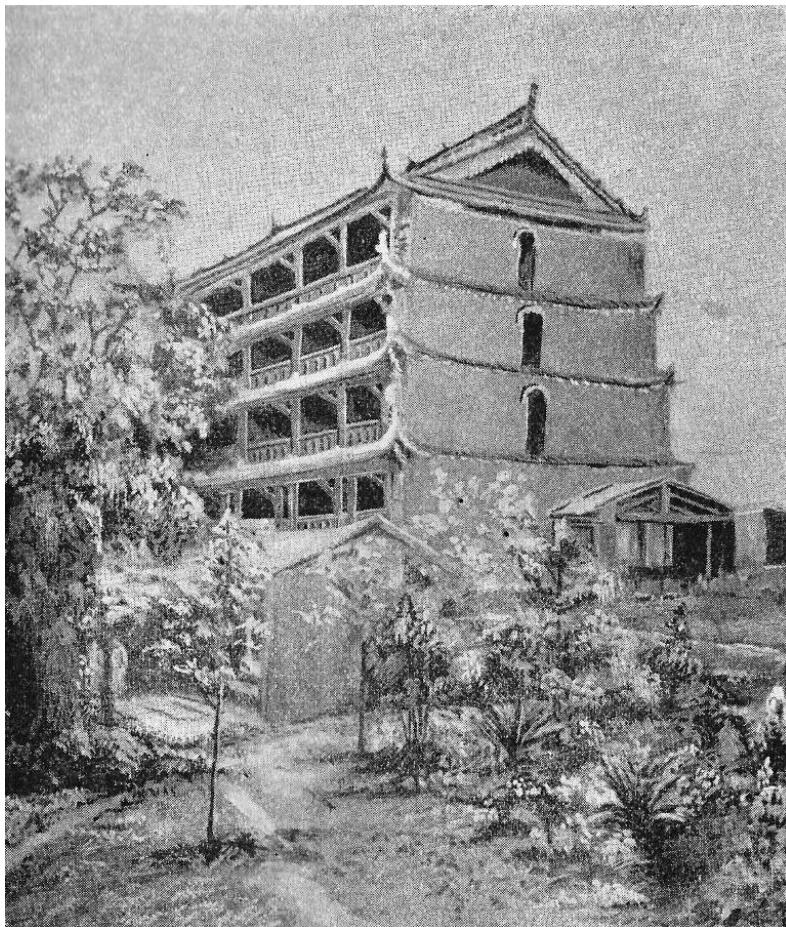
Yes, such a curiosity would be worth seeing, and so we headed down again. Only a couple of minutes and we arrived at our goal. Not much for the eye – a dilapidated building

with a lot of Arabic writing on the doors and walls, but the history of the mosque could be interesting.

The mosque was built in Mohammed's lifetime by the Arab Wah Abi Kabscha. He was a cousin of the prophet and visited the Chinese emperor as Mohammed's envoy around 630 A.D. The emperor received the Arab very graciously and gave him permission to build a mosque in Canton. When it was completed, Wah Abi Kabscha sailed back to Arabia to inform the prophet about the fortunate outcome of his mission. But then Mohammed had already died.

Wah Abi Kabscha got a copy of the prophet's writings, and with that he returned to Canton, where he died shortly afterward. The Arab's grave can still be seen a short distance outside the northern city wall. It is the Chinese Mohammedans' foremost pilgrimage site.

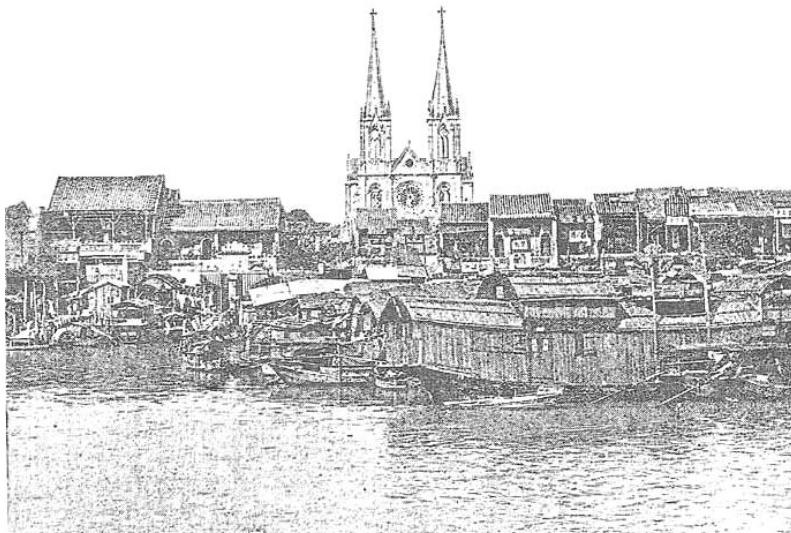
On the highest point of the ancient city wall stand a venerable, five-story temple. It is surrounded by luxuriant greenery and moss-covered banana trees. All is peaceful up here. No pulsations from Canton's throbbing life touch this eminence. Nothing disturbs the harmony of nature. This is an ideal place of rest for the tired stranger, who today has traveled through the giant city lengthwise and crosswise. Just the place where I could try to gather and sort out the sundry impressions I had received through the day.



The temple on the city wall.

Up on the veranda on the top floor, I enjoy a wonderful view while I drink the tea which a Buddhist monk sets out on a lacquered table. Myriads of small boats run back and forth in all directions on the Pearl River. Canton's floating population live on thousands of *junks* moored along its shores. The metropolis lies below me like an enormous

collection of beehives. But high in the air, far above all the meanness and misery on earth, soar the crosses on the spires of the Roman Catholic church. Even the seven and nine level high pagodas, which are seen in all directions, must yield – a portent of victory for the Nazarene's life-giving creed.



The Catholic Church seen from the River.

Over on the other side of the wall, green fields stretch up over the country as far as the eye can see. Not a tree, not a house, show any trace of human presence, but there still are millions and millions – for this is "The City of the Dead," Canton's cemetery.

If one looks a little closer at the grass-covered plain, one notices innumerable small mounds with white spots here and there. The queen of the day is just about to go to her rest behind the white mountains in the sky, but first she sends us her last farewell. Her rays spread across this miles long

hiding place for so many crushed hopes, innumerable sorrows, and brilliant triumphs.

But even here in "The City of the Dead" the sunshine seems only to fall on the children of the sun, the white marble memorials of the rich and highborn, which are so conspicuous among the poor people's green-covered mounds.

Yes, show yourself partial here too, oh, Queen of the Sky! The children of sorrow do not need your rays to light the spot where they have been granted permission to rest until the great day. No relatives come to kneel down by these little mounds with no memorial markers. The poor wretches wrote their names in water while they fought for their existence, and the memories of them faded away as quickly as the water that runs down the Pearl River, whose twisting curves coils for miles through Li Han-chang's viceroyalty.

Chapter Five

The newspaper feud

The political sky clears – Discussion in the press – A *Chinese – Defensio Populi ad Populos* – "Hunan Literature" – The question about opening Hunan Province – It grows darker again – Storm approaching – "Ling-Fêng" gets orders to go north.

After we returned from Canton, "Ling-Fêng" again went to anchor in Castle Peak Bay, and we gave up hope of any more excursions, since the unrest began to calm down again. *Ko-lao-hui* seemed to have lost courage, and thus the danger of a civil war was temporarily averted. The great powers' legations promised to remain passive provided the government acted consonant with the imperial proclamation of June 13th and paid indemnities for the destroyed property.

The authorities also immediately proceeded to investigate the requests submitted. Several Europeans plucked the magnanimity string in the press and suggested that the missions should give up their demands, since it was obvious that these enormous sums would be wrung from the districts where the uprisings had occurred. This would have been a good opportunity to in a practical way show their love for the poor people, whose benefactors they continually claim to be. But that kind of magnanimity seemed not to find any resonance in the missionaries' hearts, quite to the contrary. In

Wuhu alone they demanded an indemnity of around \$125,000 and the most severe punishments for the instigators of the uprisings.

I mentioned that the disturbances had died down, but in its place came a war in the press that in violence and strong words were reminiscent of the election campaigns in Europe. The topic was, of course, the missions, and the debate got additional interest, when several European educated Chinese joined the fray.

The signature *A Chinese* especially attracted more than the usual attention, since it soon was a very public secret that *A Chinese* was no other than Viceroy Chang Chih-tung's talented private secretary, and opinions coming from that quarter might be considered the same as those Chang Chih-tung himself held about the missions' activities. His most famous contribution to the debate, *Defensio Populi ad Populos*, which was re-printed in *North China Daily News*, and later in English, American, and Norwegian papers, brought forth a flood of rejoinders from the other side. But few of these distinguished themselves by impartiality or moderation.

And this was not to be expected. Passions were aroused, and fanatics and inexperienced missionaries expressed themselves with outbursts that got them severe reprimands from their colleagues.

At the same time there was a renewed flood of the reprehensible products that in China are known as "Hunan literature." In the chapter about the secret societies, I mentioned that Hunan was the province most hostile to foreigners and that the secret societies especially recruited in

that region. As a counterweight to all the anti-Christian literature that was fabricated in Hunan, a number of missionaries took up in defense against it with anything but prudent language. Many of their brochures contained the most irritating and insulting attacks on China's holy books.

Then the Hunanese scriveners replied to the challenges offered by these gentlemen, but in terms that was in no way seemly for disciples of the sage Confucius.

It is distressing to read many of these pamphlets, which criticize the Bible, the religious tracts, and the missionaries themselves. It is a black spot on Hunan's intelligent population that it has tolerated the dissemination of such crude products. But we must also add that a great deal of the authors' critiques was due to misunderstandings caused by poor translation of the Christian texts, and it has been shown by closer examination by competent linguists that several of the crudest statements in the Hunanese pamphlets stem from garbled interpretation of individual words in the text of the tracts.

I may also mention that the China mission's major mistake, that of allowing single women to be sent out as missionaries – this mistake, which must be disapproved by anyone who knows the social conditions – was one of the primary causes of the shameful innuendo that streamed out of the Hunanese press.

Several of the missionaries, especially the combative Dr. Griffith John, forcefully argued in the newspapers that the imperial Chinese government should intervene in the matter and punish the Hunanese pamphleteers. But then *A Chinese* again moved onto the field and gave the missionaries a

broadside. Among other things he wrote in *North China Daily News*:

"It is a little late now in the end of the 19th century to be defending the Holy Inquisition. The esteemed gentlemen on the other side seem not to understand the difficulties the Chinese government will get to cope with if it tries to punish the authors of these stupid pamphlets. If the government takes steps in that direction, it will admit the propriety of punishing Chinese citizens for writing against the Christian religion. But such an admission could easily lead to the establishment of a European inquisitorial tribunal in which the consuls could be seated as grand inquisitors and Dr. Griffith John and his ilk as the accusers.

The insanity of such an idea may be better illustrated by understanding that the Chinese government here is called on to punish its own subjects on behalf of a foreign religion – *a religion whose apostles publicly proclaim that they have come here to overturn and destroy the religious foundation on which the Chinese social system is based*.

The same arguments are made for the introduction of press censorship as those which the Catholics made in earlier times for the Inquisition, since it was not as heretics the offenders were punished, but as enemies of the state.

The basis on which Dr. Griffith John recommends prosecution of the Hunanese scribblers may perhaps be compared with the manner in which the Jewish legal experts justified their course of action against Jesus to Pontius Pilate. The Roman governor apparently understood little of their religious differences, but when the learned gentlemen insisted

that the welfare of the state required blood – then they brought him over to their side.

But to punish is not the same as to convince, and if the government were to prosecute the anti-Christian authors, I believe that we would only make bad things worse.

One of our constitutional law authorities, Ma Tuan-lin, also stated that the press censorship that the government in earlier times brought to bear against slanderous publications always intensified rather than alleviated the evil. If anti-Christian literature is to be suppressed under pressure from the European legations, then it will quite simply become impossible for my fellow citizens and the foreigners to live together in peace and quiet. The people will not tolerate such interference from the foreigners' side.

Much has been written about the crude and brutal language that these pamphlet scribblers make use of, and I must regrettably admit that the gentlemen on the other side may be justified in this. It is deplorable. But before that kind of literature is condemned in the strongest terms, I consider it fair to remind everyone that these anti-Christian pamphlets are not attacking *Christianity* – but attack the cartoonish misrepresentations that the missionaries, mainly due to ignorance of the language and the people's customs and traditions, attempt to spread across the country.

I believe that it would be best for Dr. Griffith John to wait until the public sentiment among the people themselves turn against the authors of the slanderous publications" — — —

But Dr. John would not wait and continued with his inquisitorial efforts. The pressure from the missionaries' side

finally became so strong that the legations found it expedient to obey "orders" and therefore in August sent a note to Tsung-li Yamen* requesting that the government investigate the matter and punish the authors. At the same time, they *demanded that the Hunan province be opened*, so that the anti-foreign sentiment could be extinguished in this region.

But the opening of Hunan was easier to demand than to effect. Who should do the work? A large part of the Chinese army consists of Hunanese soldiers, and these naturally will not fight against their own home province. And a fight there would be and that to the last drop of blood.

The powerful Li Hung-chang, viceroy of Chihli, the capital's province, possessed an excellent army and fleet, that perhaps could be a match for the Hunanese, but a move in that direction would have been a signal to a bloody civil war, since there are people in all parts of the country who sympathize with the Hunanese, and *Ko-lao-hui* would then easily achieve its aim of driving the Manchu dynasty from the throne.

For the time being there was nothing left but to open Hunan with European bayonets, but this would not be an easy thing to do.

The rumors of the contemplated invasion raised an indignant clamor throughout the province, and patriotic men of all classes joined in a proclamation wherein the people were called on to rise *en masse* to resist the European intrusion. The proclamation, which was translated in the English newspapers, reeked of hate and embitterment. Every

* The Chinese foreign ministry.

clan that did not send all its able-bodied men into the field was threatened with extinction.

Thus matters stood in the end of August. The political horizon looked dark, and it was soon to become even darker. On the 2nd of December the telegraph reported that the Catholic and Protestant missions in Ichang* had been burned down.

And with that the diplomatic issues entered a new phase.

A couple of days after this unhappy report had reached "*Ling-Fêng*," which still lay for anchor in Castle Peak Bay, the Chief got orders to run down to Hongkong for provisions. North to Shanghai, thought the officers – but the journey became a bit longer.

* Ichang, which we later will hear more about, is a city located about 2,500 kilometers above the mouth of the Yangtze Kiang.

Chapter Six

Hongkong

The second largest port in the world – The island's history – A Dutch merchant as the united kingdoms' consul – Smuggling – Hongkong's 50th anniversary – A visit to the capital city Victoria – In *Hongkong Hotel* – *Victoria Peak – The Happy Valley*

When we travel through England's Asian colonies, we hardly know what to admire most, the enterprise of its sons or its statesmen's eye for the future.

Who would have thought, for example, that the little island of Singapore in the Strait of Malacca would become one of the world's largest port cities? Probably very few other than the colony's founder, Sir Stamford Raffles. The same might be said about Hongkong, one of the smallest islands in the Ladrones group – only 83 square kilometers – but it is the world's second largest sea port.

China had to relinquish Hongkong to the English on 2 January 1841, after the First Opium War. The island did not look so valuable then, but the English envoy, Sir Henry Pottinger, knew what he was doing; he saw possibilities for the future. This poor, barren island was surrounded by the

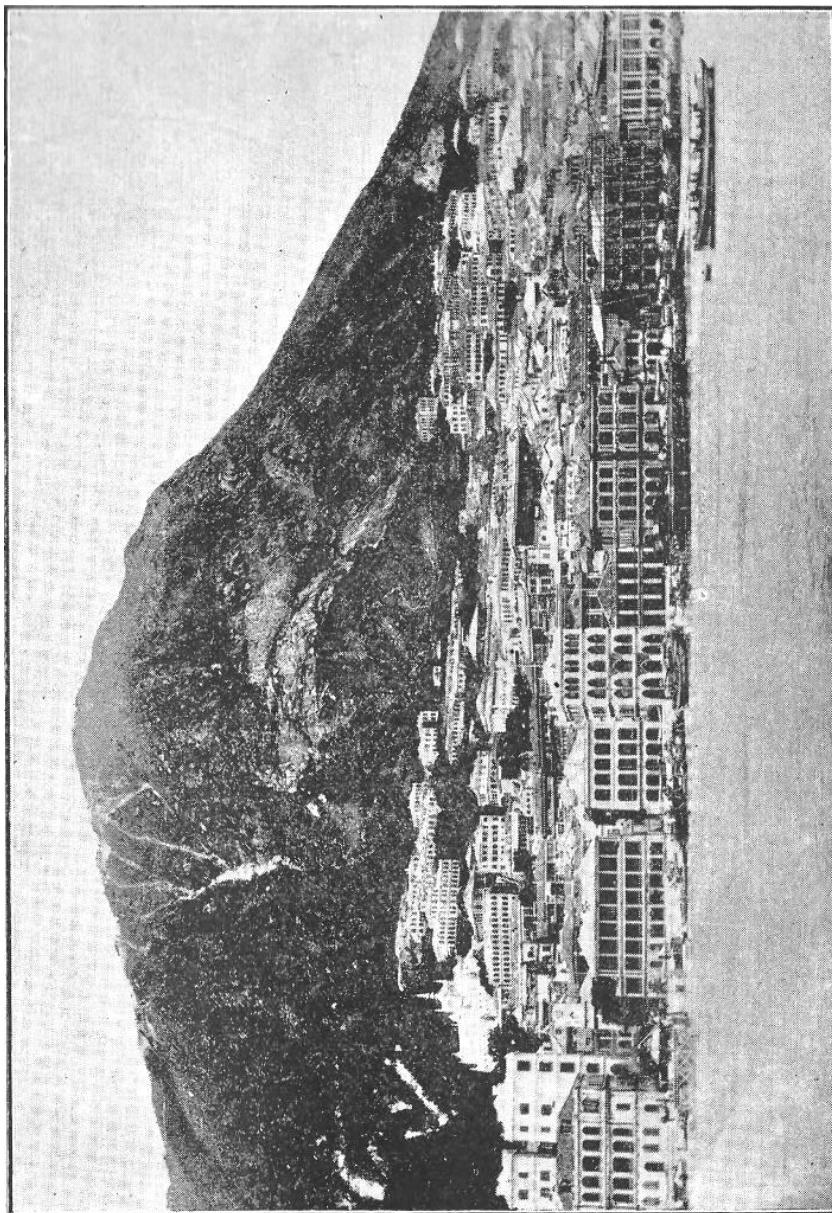
mainland and small islands, which together forms one of the best and roomiest harbors in the East.

The following years have shown that the English representative could hardly have chosen a better place for a new colony. The magic wand of trade and seafaring has totally changed the appearance of the island, and when we now stand in the beautiful public gardens created in terraces up Victoria Peak and look down on Hongkong's capital city Victoria with its elegant public buildings, the merchant princes magnificent villas, and the long granite quays, when we cast an eye out over the harbor, where rows of ships lie at anchor as far as the eye can see – then we as Europeans with good reason feel proud that this is a work of *our* civilization.

Many storms have passed over Hongkong since 1841. Early on the climate threatened to put an end to the colonial venture, but strong precautionary measures have warded off this danger, and the health conditions are now, if not exactly good, not so bad for a place south of the 22nd latitude.

In 1862, after the 2nd Opium War, the English also got the small peninsula Kowloon, which lies on the other side of the harbor. Here, a virtual fairyland landscape has been created with the most magnificent gardens and villas, dry-docks, and wharves. It is difficult to believe that this oasis 30 years ago was just a barren, sandy tongue of land.

Despite the ravages of numerous tropical cyclones and firestorms and several hard financial crises, Hongkong has steadily progressed – in the last half-century at an astonishing pace. The population has risen from 5,000 to 180,000. Of these, 8,000 are European, 170,000 Chinese, and ca. 2,000 from every other country in the world.



View of Victoria from the harbor.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

The majority are, not surprisingly, engaged in seafaring and trade. And in this vast center of maritime commerce, Norway, which is No. 5 among the world's seafaring nations, has, as in Singapore, one unpaid consul!

It may be of interest to see the following official statistics for 1893 reported by the Board of Trade and Norway's Central Bureau of Statistics.

	Declared Shipping		Value in Norw. crowns of imports and exports	
	No. ships	Ton	Imports	Exports
London (coastal shipping excluded)	10,025	7,782,402	2,548,087,200	1,379,970,000 (Foreign and colonial goods combined)
Hongkong (<i>Junk</i> shipping excluded)	4,371	5,266,349	*	
Singapore [†] (<i>Junk</i> shipping excluded)	4,435	3,519,063	334,800,000	292,950,000
Shanghai	3,160	3,265,000	495,020,000	135,472,000
All of Norway (coastal shipping excluded)	11,551	2,846,948	234,568,600	136,086,600

* There are no official reports of Honkong's imports and exports, but the total volume is estimated to be around 360 million *kroner*, exclusive of a enormous transit trade.

† As an illustration of the Norwegian mercantile community's knowledge of East-Asian commerce I can quote a declaration by the Kristiania Merchant's Association regarding establishing a consulate in Singapore. It states that "Singapore is a place that has little or no exports, that its main importance is to serve as a coaling station for the steamships sailing in the Orient, and the Association can in no way understand of what use a paid consul in Singapore would be"!

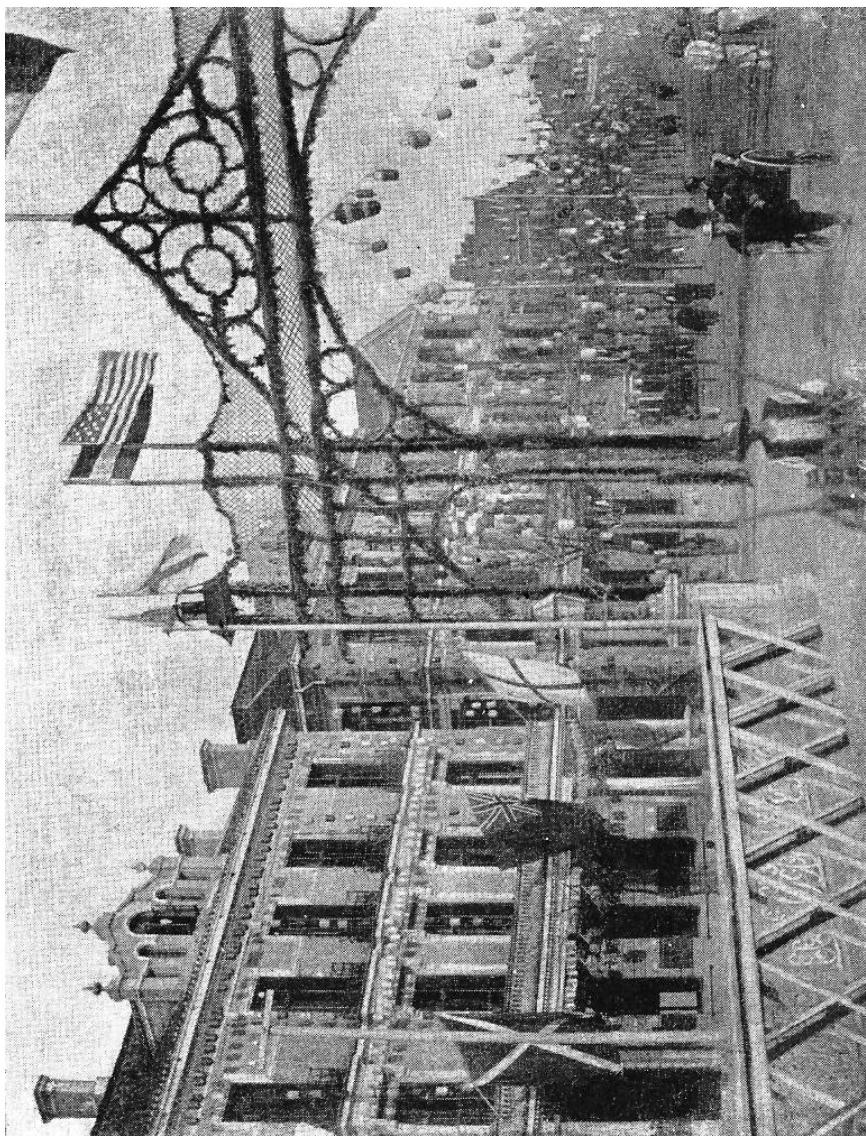
That this thriving free trade port is a thorn in the side of the Chinese authorities is easy to understand. Not just because the island were wrested from China with cannons and bayonets, but also for the reason I have mentioned earlier, that all of southern China's smugglers and robber bands find a safe haven in Hongkong's spacious harbor.

In order to hinder opium smuggling on too large a scale, the English government has agreed to help the Chinese authorities stop the evil, which also damaged the colony's interests. The monopoly of selling opium is the island's most important source of income, and the value of the monopoly sank in the same ratio as the smuggling rose. In the last several years the Chinese government has bought a number of armed gunboats, which also act as customs cruisers around the island. This blockade of Hongkong, as the colonials call it, is not particularly loved, but it is a very necessary preventative measure from the Chinese authorities' side, if the whole mainland population in Hongkong's vicinity is not to be poisoned by cheap opium.

As the island's commercial importance grew, the English have sought to secure this precious pearl against possible theft by their European rivals or a Chinese attack. Large modern defensive works have been built around the entire island, which also is protected by a superb mine system, and to top it off the port is home base for the English squadron in East Asia. It is therefore also rightly referred to as the Gibraltar of the East.

The colony celebrated its Fiftieth Jubilee on the 21st of January 1891 with a large participation and exuberance from the European population's side. The officers who could

Down by the wharves at the 50th Jubilee.



(This page intentionally left blank.)

get leave from "*Ling-Fêng*," which then lay on station outside the island, naturally went in to Hongkong for the occasion.

The day's solemnities began with an assembly of the colony's executive and legislative authorities in City Hall at 9:30 AM. The governor, Sir William Des Voeux, first thanked the gathering for his warm reception on his return from England – he had had a year's leave of absence – and then read aloud a mass of telegrams from all corners of the world, and the following telegram was sent to the queen:

"TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

Assembled at Victoria on Wednesday, 21st January, 1891, in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the cession of the Colony, we, the Governor and the Executive and Legislative Councils of Hongkong, humbly approach your Majesty with renewed expression of our loyalty and devotion. The people of the Colony, for the most part your Majesty's subjects join unanimously in grateful recognition of the wise policy of your Majesty's Government which has granted the same rights and equal justice to all the numerous races of which they are composed; and they recognize as largely owing to the wisdom of your Majesty's constitutional rule, the conditions under which, within a half century entirely comprised within your Majesty's reign, a barren inhospitable island has become the civilised centre of an enormous trade, the home of a large and prosperous community, and an important outpost of your Majesty's Empire. On their behalf therefore, as well as on our own, we fervently pray that God will long preserve the health of the Sovereign whose reign has been fraught with so many blessings, while we at the same time rejoice that for succeeding generations

the name of your Majesty, attached to this city, will ever serve to recall the memory of your Majesty's life and example. Signed on behalf of the Executive and Legislative Councils, with which is associated a Committee specially appointed for the occasion and representative of all present nationalities.

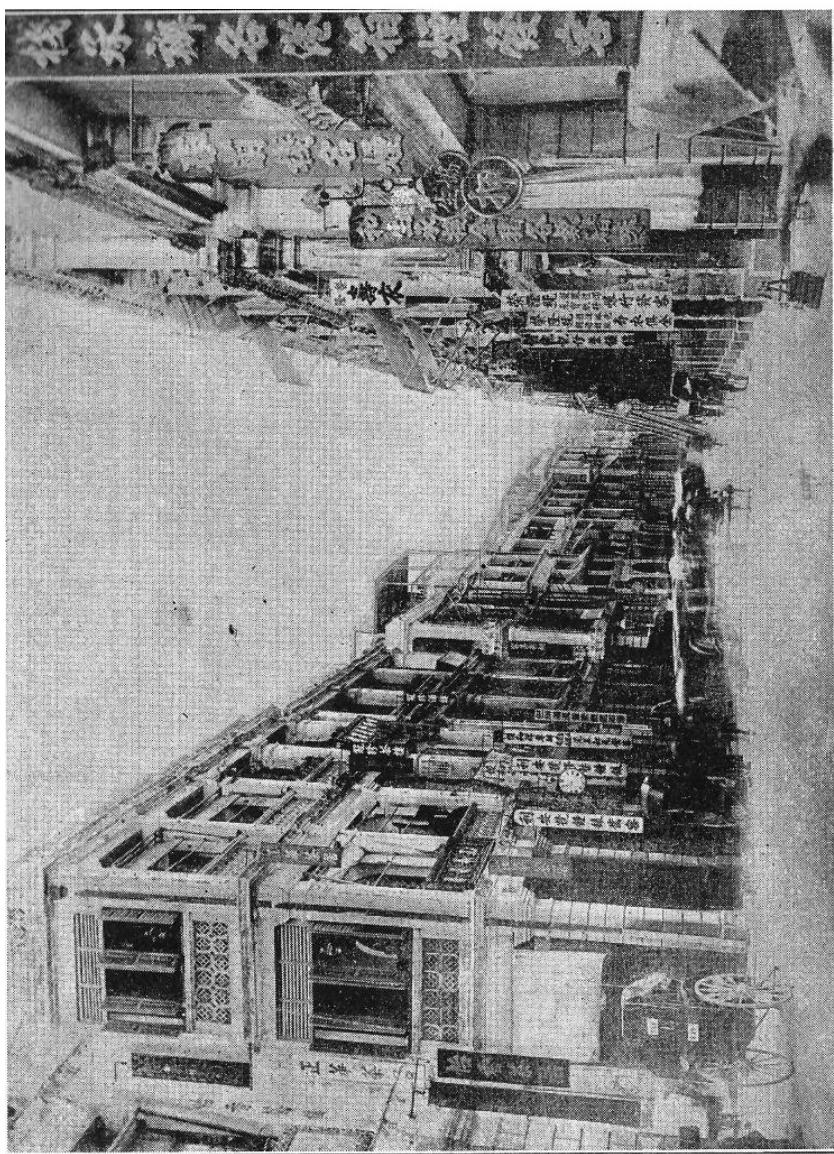
G. WILLIAM DES VOEUX,
Governor."

At 10 o'clock the whole gathering, followed by the commanding officers of the garrison and the squadron, walked in procession to the cathedral. All buildings were magnificently decorated with flags and a surfeit of the orient's most beautiful flowers. When the cortege neared the church, the Highlander's music corps began playing "God Save the Queen" while the governor and his glittering staff with bared heads paced slowly and solemnly up to the entrance. Bishop Burdon conducted a short and moving service in the tastefully decorated cathedral. Everybody was moved in this solemn moment. Some grey-headed men sobbed like little children. Perhaps they had not seen their mother country since the founding of the colony, and now their childhood memories revived with multiplied strength, radiant in sunshine and beautiful as never before.

After this memorable scene the gathering dispersed. At 12 o'clock the day was saluted with 50 cannon shots from the large English and Chinese squadrons out on the flag decked harbor and from all the forts. The noise was so loud that it was said to have been heard all the way up to Canton.

Then the celebration really began and continued through the rest of the week.

Quen's Road.



(This page intentionally left blank.)

Hongkong's capital Victoria, this gathering place for all the peoples of the earth, from Australian aborigines to blonde-haired English ladies, could furnish enough material for interesting observations even if one had a couple of years to spend here. A too detailed description of these studies would be tiresome, sleep inducing, and therefore we will only imagine a brief visit to the city.

Victoria, or Hongkong as it is called in daily speech, is located on the northwest side of the island. This location was not chosen with health considerations in mind, since the mountains bar any breath of wind except when typhoons sweep across the island and cause the large ocean liners to tug at their anchor chains as if possessed by evil spirits.

But the English were not looking for a health spa, but rather a commercial gold mine, and that they found along the shoreline where the city now lies. To compensate, the colonials' homes are equipped with material comforts that we do not even dream about up here in the North. The merchant princes, who have a surfeit of this world's mammon, keep luxury yachts or build palatial villas high up on Victoria Peak's artificial terraces where they can rest after the day's toil and trouble in a somewhat cool environment. And if their health should decline too rapidly, there is the East's sanatorium, the lovely Japan, to take refuge in only a week's voyage away.

Queen's Road is Victoria's principal street. Here, the European and Chinese merchants have their stores and offices. The curio shops are of especial interest for visitors. Here everything we can imagine of Chinese curiosities, elegant silk embroideries, magnificent ivory fans, jewelry in

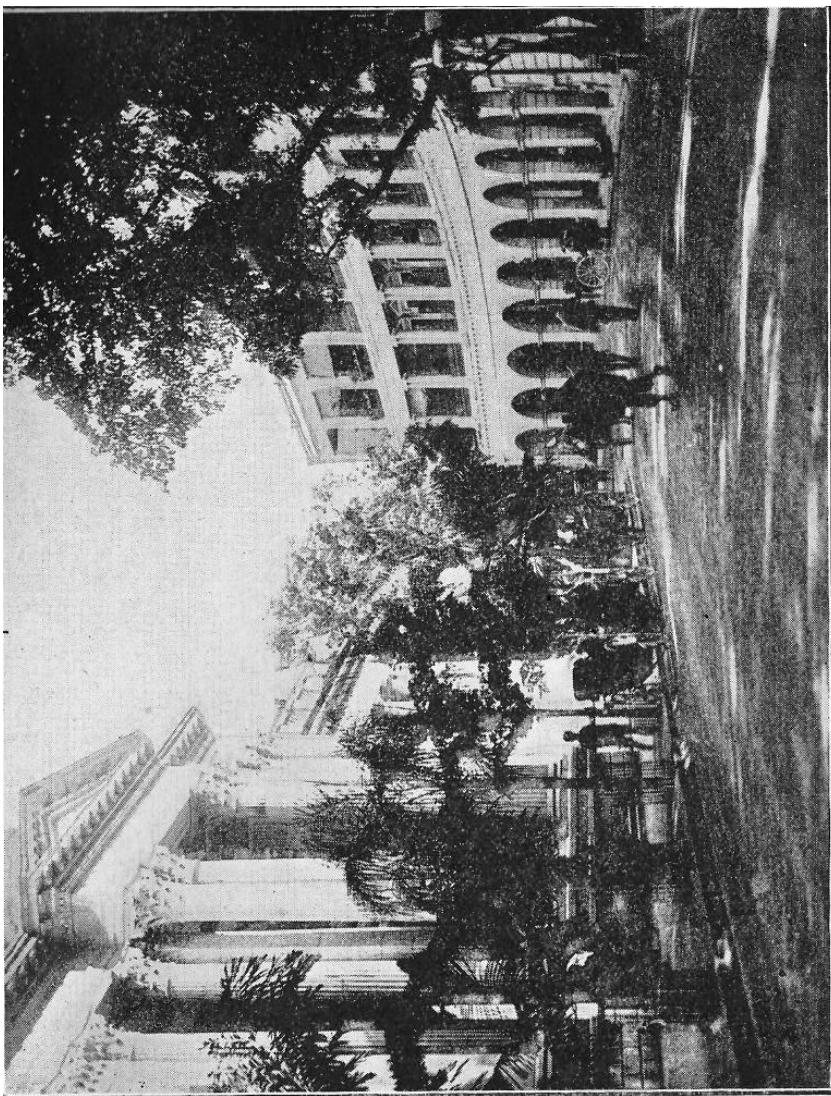
silver and gold, in short, all that can bring a woman's heart to flutter.

Farthest up in Queen's Road we see several imposing buildings such as Hongkong & Shanghai City Bank, City Hall with a museum and theater, and close by some barracks with a large open square outside. This is usually occupied by soldiers who seek diversion from the monotonous garrison life a game with a game of cricket or football – a warm, but healthy activity in these latitudes.

From Queen's road we take a detour into less fashionable quarters. The colorful, gilded Chinese signs are seen everywhere, but they do not always display the unintelligible chicken scratches of Chinese characters. The English language has made considerable impact, and some signs exhibit wonderful examples of this. In Wellington Street there is a son of the Celestial Empire, who calls himself "Dealer in Tailor and Draper." It hardly means that he sells tailors, but with a little bit of good will, it is clear enough. A restaurant of the 5th or 6th class has adorned itself with this inscription:

ALLWAYS HAS ANY FRANCI
PASTRY DAINER LUNCH
SUPPER ALL KIND OF
FOREIGN CAKES
FOR SALE

A ladies' couturiére is found near the cathedral, and a gentleman, who paints signs and washes clothes, resides in Hollywood Road. The most diverse businesses are found in the same store. Watchmakers, shoemakers, and tailors in one



Oueen's Road – The entrance to City Hall can be seen to the left.

(This page intentionally left blank)

room. The rents are very high in the city, and the Chinese are as parsimonious as they come. Where the Europeans cannot earn their daily bread, the Chinese save up capital.

The Chinese are well known for their talents in the pictorial arts. The water color paintings that are sold to foreigners are often very well executed and quite cheap, since the competition is sharp. For a dollar one can get a whole box with pictures. Family life, flower arrangements, and colorful butterflies are the most common subjects.

Since the Europeans arrived, portrait painting has also taken an upswing. The number of painters in Hongkong is *legio*. Most of these artists do not deliver artistic works of the first rank, but then the price is not such as to encourage making too much of an effort. 2 to 3 dollars for a 24" high portrait. The sailors, who are the usual customers, are not so picky about the quality. If he can get a rosy-cheeked portrait of his Anne Kristine, or whatever her name might be, bedecked with such jewels and necklaces as the painter's imagination has lent her, the lovesick swabbie is well satisfied. But if one is willing to go to a higher price, up to 6 – 8 dollars, then the unpretentious artist can provide a real work of art that might be comparable to several of our best Norwegian artists most expensive efforts.

The lower classes of both the Chinese and European population has settled down in Tai-ping-shan, just above Queen's Road. *Tai-ping-shan* means "Height of the Highest Peace," but this quarter is the most raucous and disreputable in the entire city. One might almost imagine having been transported to Whitechapel with its stinking grog shops and blaring music halls.

The *demimonde*, which is mainly of American, Japanese, and Chinese origin, also has its headquarters in Tai-ping-shan, and when one passes through this area late in the evening, one gets a good idea of the moral maelstrom up there on the "Height of the Highest Peace."

We will now drive back to Hongkong Hotel and enjoy our lunch. In one of the hotel's luxurious, shaded rooms, we sink down into one of the soft leather armchairs and rest after the morning's exertions. The damp climate saps your strength.



Queen's Road – The Clock Tower.

We press an electrical button, and the boy comes in and is requested to prepare the bath. When a Scandinavian or German comes to China, he usually finds that the English is a peculiar people with regard to bathing at any or all times of

the day. A couple of times a week ought to be sufficient. But little by little his opinion is changed; he soon finds that he could well use a cool-down each morning, and soon he is as enthusiastic as any Englishman about taking a bath morning, noon, and evening.

This frequent *toilette* requires a lot of time, but most Europeans in China have enough and to spare of that commodity. They did not come out to the East in order to work themselves to death. Most would decline with thanks a normal workday of 8 hours.

After the bath we change clothes. The white suit we wore in the morning is damp and uncomfortable. Europeans in southern China usually go dressed in thin flannel or silk with yellow or lacquered shoes and large Stanley hats.

It is not then to wonder that I found it a little comical, when I one day paid a visit onboard a Norwegian steamship and found both mates and machinists working in ca. 35° Reaumur in thick, grey wadmal shirts that would be appropriate for the Arctic Ocean. But then I remembered that their monthly pay was hardly 1/3 of what the seamen of other nations are paid out here on the China Coast. They do not have that much left to buy white clothing with, when they have families at home.

"Gong, gong, gong" now resounds throughout the hotel, and the guests gather in the vast dining room, where several fans, or *punkahs*, are kept turning by servants, who sit and pull cords outside the doors.

The incoming sun rays are moderated by jalousies, so that it is always cool and comfortable inside, and that is needed,

since the Europeans' appetites are not inordinate after they have been out here a couple of years.

A half-hundred boys in snow-white, fluttering robes wait on the numerous small tables and watch for the least hint that service may be desired, while they trip soundlessly around on thick felt soles. But if there are many guests present, it may sometimes happen that one guest or another is missed, and if this gentleman should be one of those, who in Europe or America brushed his own shoes and made his own bed, it is not uncommon to hear a drawn-out embittered "bo-o-o-y," that causes more civilized persons to send him a less than approving glance.

It is quite peculiar, this little word, "*boy*." When we sit in a corner of the hotel's dining room and study the assorted individuals, we can with a little practice easily hear by the call "*boy*" from which social level the caller comes. Short and low from the well-mannered European and longer and louder as the manners decline. It does not help if diamond rings flash on the fingers; "*your tone of voice betrays you*."

The most refined tourist, who perhaps has just arrived from the elegant restaurants of Paris' boulevards, will find enough dishes to tickle his palate in the East's European hotels. The delicious *samlai*, the Chinese salmon, pheasants, and other wild fowl will always be at hand with curry and rice and other good and palatable dishes peculiar to the East.

From diverse kinds of ices and jellies we turn to the fruits. There are enough to choose between; a fine mangosteen, delicate lychee, or refreshing pomelo beside the simpler varieties, such as bananas, pineapple, and oranges.



The Victoria Peak Tram.

(This page intentionally left blank)

We then rise from the table's delights with a lit Havana cigar and stroll out to the verandas, find a suitable armchair, and doze off in a comfortable, sleepy laziness while pretending to read the newspapers.

In the meantime, the boy has received his orders. At 4:30 o'clock a sedan chair is to stand ready outside the hotel, and we will make an excursion to the top of Victoria Peak. The easiest way to make the ascent is to buy a ticket on the almost vertical cable car that go up and down every 15 minutes, but then we will miss the beautiful botanical gardens, and that we should not miss.

Besides, many find that sitting in these elastic bamboo chairs carried by 3 – 4 coolies is a quite comfortable mode of transportation. Perhaps a little unfamiliar, uncertain sensation in the beginning, but that soon passes.

The sedan chairs move out at the appointed time. Magnificent tree-lined roads with occasional openings, so that we now and then can catch a glimpse of the harbor and the city, lead in zigzags all the way up to the top. The colony's founders always looked for ways to improve the climate, and they tried to achieve this by, among other things, systematic tree planting. Almost all the mountaintops are covered with young pine trees. Oddly enough, pine trees thrive well in this tropical climate together with palms, bamboo, and banana trees.

The public gardens that we pass along the way are among the most beautiful in the East. Whenever I visited Hongkong, I always took a trip up here to truly enjoy the marvelous flower gardens and the slow murmur of spring-fed rivulets and children's laughter.

After an hour or so we have finally reached the island's highest point, the signal station on Victoria Peak. What a magnificent panorama! There is the large harbor with its fleet of steamships and *junks*, while *sampans** and steam sloops hurry off in all directions like so many black specks. Just below us the city lies covered by a thick carpet of smoke. The two sections – the European and the Chinese – can be clearly distinguished. Likewise the batteries halfway up the mountainside, ready to sweep the latter quarter if there should be disturbances the police could not cope with. Out on the ocean on the other side there are countless steamships and sailing ships heading to or from this gigantic trade center.

But now the sun is lowering. We mount the sedan chairs, and proceed slowly downward, but in another direction so that we can take advantage of the occasion to visit Happy Valley, one of the places most worth seeing in the vicinity of Hongkong.

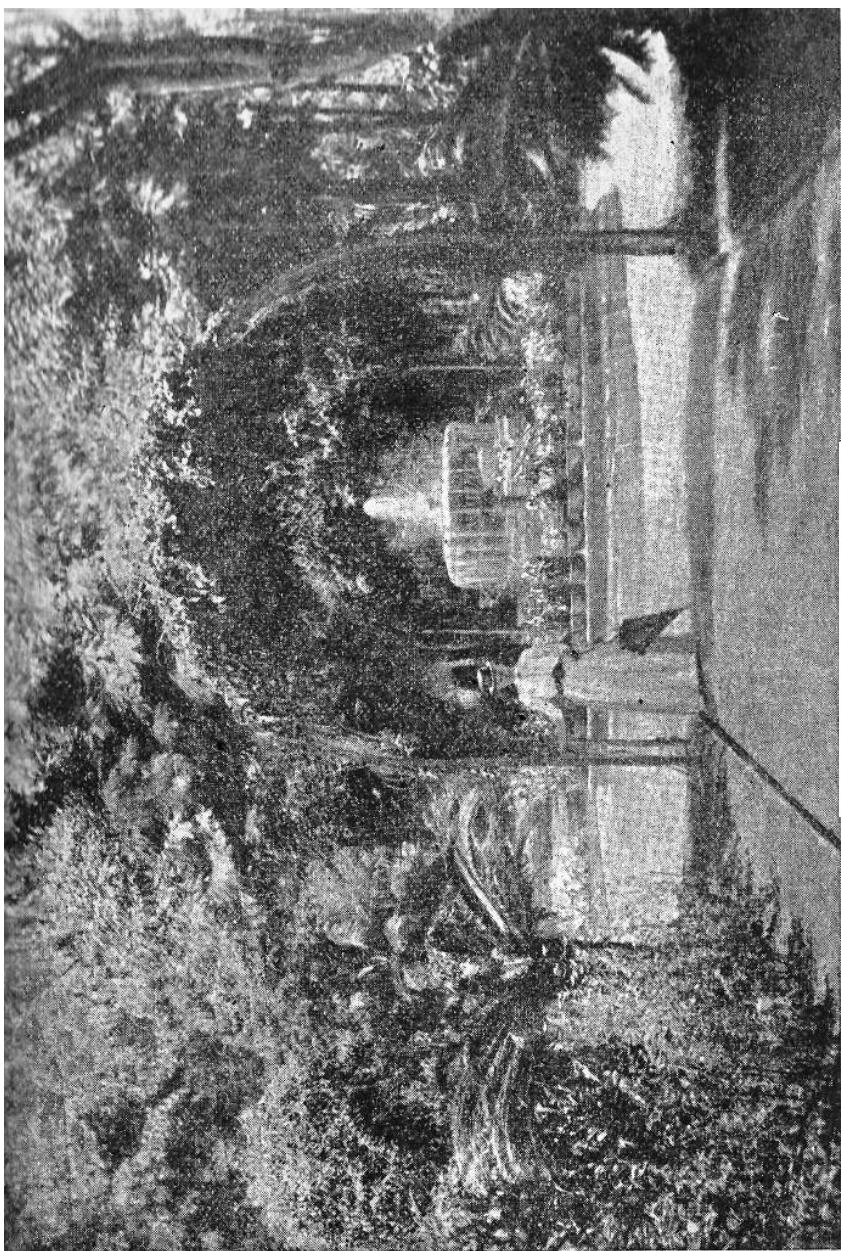
This lovely little evergreen spot, where Protestants, Catholics, Parsees, and Mohammedans have chosen their grave sites, lies surrounded by mountains on three sides. The Protestant cemetery is the most attractive and almost equals the botanical gardens in flowery beauty.

As we pass through the entrance, we at once feel we have arrived at a peaceful place. Hush, hush! A melancholy feeling sneaks into our hearts at the sight of all the garlanded monuments.

Oh, how much ambition, how much disappointment, crushed hopes, heroic courage have come to rest here! Many of these glittering names have come from the West. Perhaps

* Small, flat-bottomed boats.

Happy Valley Cemetery.



(This page intentionally left blank)

they found what they sought out here in the East; perhaps not. But one thing they have found – peace.

And while we stand in here under the shade-giving, evergreen trees among the lovely flowers, we may perhaps wish that if our life should be cut short out here in the East, let me rest here in Happy Valley. At least I have often wished it so. In here, where all laughter and jubilation subside and the busiest tongues become still, here I genuinely felt the poignant elegy that whisper to us from the flower gardens of the dead.

Chapter Seven

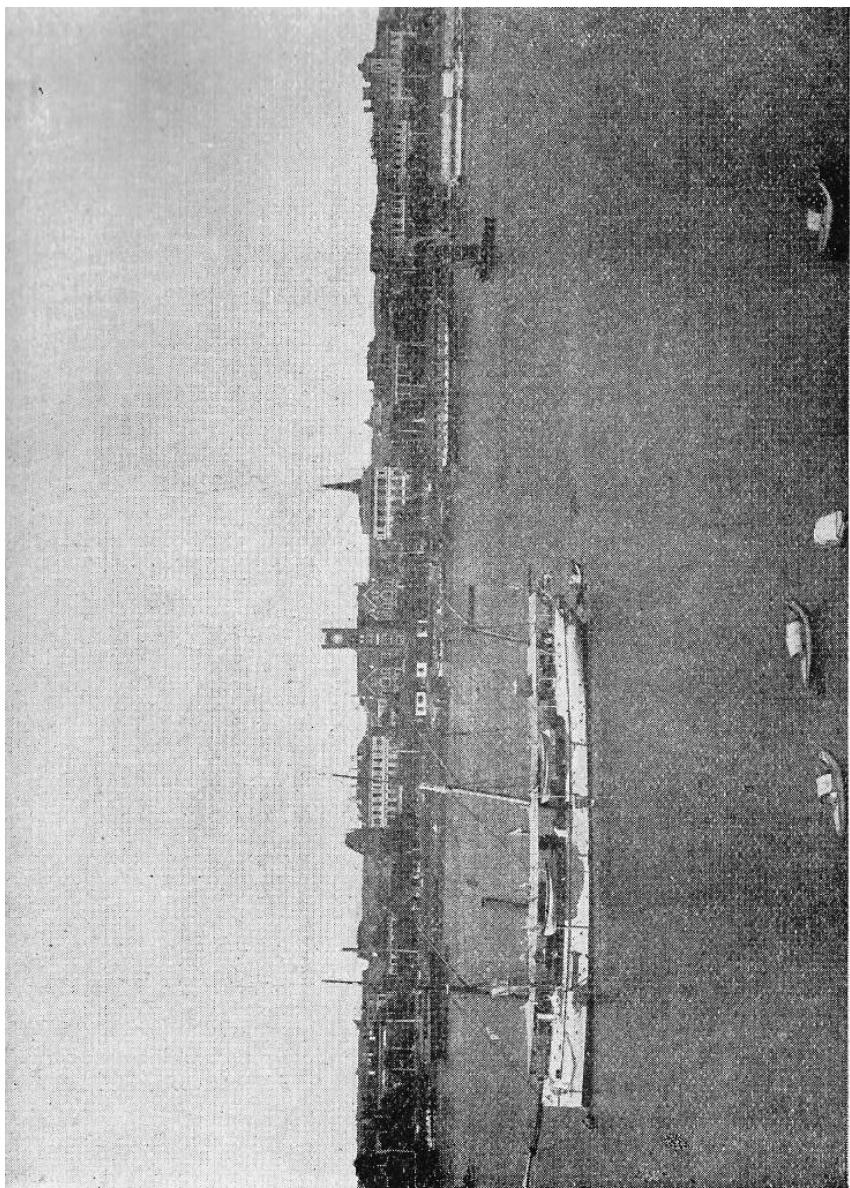
Mr. Mason's high treason

From south to north – Shanghai – Revolutionary movements – Arms smuggling – Mason's arrest and prosecution – Li Hung-chang breaks the Western powers' coalition.

In the middle of September "*Ling-Fêng*" left Hongkong together with her sister-ship "*Fei-Hoo*," which also had been ordered to go north.

They now steamed at top speed up along the coast, in through the Chusan archipelago, and after a week's pleasant voyage both gunboats lay moored in Shanghai's spacious river harbor, where a large number of foreign naval vessels had gathered.

The attack on the Europeans in Ichang on the 2nd of September was viewed as a forerunner of more serious events. The foreign legations for the first time since their arrival in Peking were agreed about one thing – that now one *must* put the knife to the government's throat, if the West's prestige in East-Asia was not to be lost. The opening of the Hunan province again was on the table with renewed urgency. Just threats would no longer be sufficient.



Shanghai viewed from the river.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

It was also whispered that the Western powers were thinking about occupying Shanghai and the Wusong forts until the government had acceded to all their demands. But this coup was to be accomplished with such superior forces that all bloodshed could be avoided.

This was why all these threatening warships were gathered in Shanghai's harbor, and still more were expected. These precautions also seemed to be necessary, since reports were coming in from all the provinces along the shores of the Yangtze Kiang about revolutionary agitation, and that this could at any time lead to outbreaks. Evidence for this had already been gained by the arrest of Henry Allen Welch Mason.

This gentleman was employed at the customs office in Chinkiang, and, according to the information obtained from his prosecution it appears he already in June had entered into treasonous negotiations with members of *Ko-lao-hui* in Chinkiang. The young Englishman probably dreamed of playing a significant role in a revolutionary drama and thereby get relief from the tedium of his existence in the last four years in an outpost.

Anyway, Mason undertook to smuggle in weapons and engage foreigners to assist in the matter. He often talked about *Ko-lao-hui* to his friends and proposed that they should join the society – in order to become acquainted with their plans and betray all to the Chinese government. But they only laughed and advised him to break off all contact with the leaders. When they later saw that he really was serious about it, one of them pretended to agree to help him.

One of the influential Europeans that Mason tried to connect with was William Mesny, a British subject, who had participated in the Taiping Rebellion and had later been employed in the Chinese army as an instructor with rank of major general. Mesny has lived in Shanghai in later years, and here in early August he received a letter from Mason that read as follows:

"Dear Sir,

I beg to request that a very high official of Nanking commands me to write to you for to make a contract for:

1. To send land between Chinkiang to Shanghae within limit of what time the following, viz., 100 repeating carbines, new pattern, like Colt's Lightning, price wholesale about 17 dollars with 500 cartridges each, and straps; and 100 revolvers, Webley Bull-dog (American) double action, 4½ inches barrel, 44 calibre. Cen. price with 500 rounds each gun, about 1 dol. 50 c.

Please state earliest within what time limit, price of articles, and commission required, and how paid.

2. To prepare 1,000 men with guns and drill, and 50 European sailors and gunners. Must within three months ready to capture two river forts, W. and K., and three C. men-of-war to bring up river under foreign gunners.

Please state lowest price for the first month, your own monthly pay. Afterwards to make you the general of half to begin, and pay of foreigners according to success. Kindly to reply by bearer, because if you do not we find another. The bearer has ten friends, and if you betray, they will shoot you. If you afterwards inform the authorities, we must know and punish. If you come in, then certain succeed, and you great general with 500 taels per month. The bearer can to trust if you tell him. Better to write clear, pretend

hand, no sign. Write answer immediate, foreign word in Chinese envelope, address, &c, X., c/o Custom-house Post Office, Chinkiang. Also next Saturday can trust young Chinese on Garden Bridge; he will say 'Liang,' you say, 'Chiang.'"

Mason then waited for an answer, but none came, since General Mesny was much too cautious a gentleman to enter into such a doubtful adventure.

Thus Mason was obliged to rely on himself. Under pretense of sickness the young conspirator got a couple of months leave of absence to travel to Japan, but instead he set course for Hongkong.

Prior to his departure he gave his supposed cohort the key to a cipher code that was to be used for any correspondence and directions for certain measures to be taken when Mason returned with weapons and ammunition.

In order to avert all suspicion with regard to his changed itinerary, Mason wrote to the customs director in Chinkiang and told him that he in Shanghai had received a letter informing him that his uncle was expected to arrive in Hongkong in a few days, and he had gone there so that he might accompany his uncle to Japan.

In Hongkong Mason immediately began to make a large purchase from an arms dealer. He also got hold of the mate on a steamship, who had just been paid off. Mason asked him if he would like to enter into the custom service, and if it also was possible to hire a score of idle seamen. The mate agreed and came back the same evening with 17 men. Mason gave them a little advance, so that they could pay their debt to the boarding masters, and told them that he had some weapons

that needed to be packed in cases, and he would like their help with that.

The next day the cases were wrapped in mats and shipped onboard the steamship "*Chiyuen*" as shovels and steel. The mate also got hold of another 12 sailors, who hardly had any notion of what was being asked of them. They were only happy to find work.

Mason told the mate that the cases were to be off-loaded near Chinkiang and that the steamship's crew was to be persuaded to stop voluntarily or with force. The mate began to make objections and said that this scheme would be much too dangerous, but still received the revolvers that Mason gave him to distribute among the sailors, and they agreed to meet aboard "*Chiyuen*," which was to depart Hongkong late that evening.

The mate went down to the steamship agency to buy tickets for himself and his men on "*Chiyuen*," but the clerk, who possibly had got word of what was afoot, refused to sell him tickets, because the ship already was overfilled. The mate wanted to go to Mason to tell him about this, but "*Chiyuen*" had then already left.

The sailors now began to worry and seem to have become suspicious. They demanded that the mate guarantee in writing that they would get employment in the customs service, and when he could not give any, the majority refused to go.

Only the mate and 5 others were curious to see how the venture would fare, and they went to Shanghai with the next steamer, "*Amoy*."

The police detectives in Hongkong had already advised the customs service in Shanghai that the smuggled goods

were on the way, and when "*Chiyuen*" arrived, a large contingent of customs agents was waiting for it. The cases were immediately found and brought ashore. They were found to contain 120 rifles, 128 revolvers, 206 bayonets, 12 axes, and 62,850 cartridges.

Mason, who was onboard, understood at once that all was discovered, and he tried to save himself and his purchase in a very naïve way. From "*Chiyuen*" he immediately wrote a letter to the customs director as follows:

*"Steamship Chiyuen, Shanghae, September 12, 1891.
Sir,*

I am C. W. Mason, Fourth Assistant (A), transferred from Chinkiang to Peking; with six weeks' leave. Shortly before I left Chinkiang (end of August), I was put in the way of discovering a very serious conspiracy of the Ko Lao Secret Society. I reported the matter to Mr. Acting Commissioner J. R. Brazier at the time. Although he made light of the importance of it, I employed my first fortnight of leave in following it up, and now I have to report that a quantity of arms and ammunition-viz., 'G. & Co.,' thirty-five packages shovels and steel-has arrived by this vessel from Hong Kong, *en route* for Chinkiang.

"My object in giving this information is not to ask you to seize it here, but to allow it to go on, as applied for," to Chinkiang. I have certain information that if it is seized here it will precipitate an immediate rise at all the ports and the seizure of Customs moneys. If no suspicion is shown, the arms will be landed and stored at Chinkiang. The movement will not be carried out for some weeks, and we shall be able to track the contraband to its storing-place, seize all previous stores, and have sure evidence by which to secure and convict the ringleaders and crush the revolt. I can scarcely dwell sufficiently on the importance of allowing the

goods to go quietly forward, and letting them be applied for in the usual way at Chinkiang. The Society have their agents, both on the steamers and in the Yamen, so, for a guard, none of the soldiers could be trusted. But as if I am suspected of treachery my life will be in danger, I should be obliged if one or a couple of officers could be sent with me. I need scarcely say that the whole matter, from beginning to end, will be laid before the Inspector-General in a Memorandum from me.

* ... "I remain, &c. 4

(Signed) "C. W. MASON."

Shortly after sending the letter, Mason went ashore to find out the outcome. He announced himself to the customs director, who had just received his letter. Mr. Bredon said it would be impossible to accommodate Mr. Mason's request, since the cases had already been brought ashore, and told him to immediately travel to Peking and inform the inspector general about everything. Mr. Bredon understood in the course of the conversation that Mason knew the smuggled goods had been confiscated, but did not suspect the role that Mason had played in their being shipped from Hongkong. Mason promised to go to Peking with the steamship "*Fungshun*," which was just about to leave Shanghai.

A couple of days later the customs director found out that Mason had changed his travel plan. He received 2 letters from Mason stating that Mason had been forced to continue on his way up to Chinkiang because he shortly after his conference with the director had received a message that read:

"Are you betraying us? If you do not leave for Chinkiang to-night with the things you will not leave Shanghae alive. I shall meet you there.

(Signed) "A. S."

Mr. Bredon now understood that there was "a cuckoo in the nest" and telegraphed to Chinkiang.

When Mason arrived, a customs service officer came onboard and told him: "We know all about it, Mr. Mason; you had better come with me."

His luggage was immediately searched, and ca. 3 kilograms of dynamite and some dynamite fuses were found in his bags. After a short discussion it was decided that it would be best to bring him aboard the English gunboat "*Redpole*," which lay anchored in the harbor, since rumors of the arrest had caused considerable excitement among the Chinese down on the pier.

Aboard "*Redpole*," Mason was interrogated, and when he could not give a satisfactory explanation for the dynamite, the captain and the consul decided to send him to Shanghai under guard and this was done the next day. On arrival in Shanghai, the customs director ordered the captain on "*Ling-Fêng*" to take care of the young conspirator. He came onboard, but all was done so quietly that none of the officers had any idea who the captain's new guest was.

His appearance did not give any indication of a man who could take an active part in a revolutionary drama. The fellow gave an impression of being of a very delicate constitution. A recreational cruise to Japan would surely have served him better, and if his leave had been used for that purpose, his superiors and the diplomats would have been saved from a lot

of trouble and worry. Otherwise, he had handsome, finely formed facial features and an intelligent, well-mannered appearance.

The next day we read in the morning papers about Mason's arrest in Chinkiang and a number of conjectures with regard to his plans. The reporters still did not know that he was onboard "*Ling-Fêng*." Later in the morning the Chief went ashore to see the customs director without giving any orders respecting his guest, so when Mason came up to me as the officer on watch and requested permission to go ashore, I was surprised and gave him a look, but thought I might have misheard him and just told him the steam sloop was ready to take anyone ashore when requested.

Shortly after Mason's departure, the Chief came aboard with a high-ranking customs official and inquired about the young gentleman's whereabouts.

"Went ashore about 15 minutes ago, Captain," I replied.

They both looked very dismayed, but quickly composed themselves, and the Chief asked me to follow the customs official ashore, and only now was I told who the captain's guest was. He was to be interrogated at 12 o'clock, so it was imperative to find the fellow. Fortunately, Mason had not intended to do a vanishing act. In one of the hotels we were told that he had gone to the lawyer Mr. Wilkerson, who was to be his defense attorney in the impending legal proceedings, and there we found him.

Mason made a polite excuse for the bother he had caused and followed us to the custom service's main office, where the *taotai* of Shanghai and several other high Chinese officials were gathered to observe the initial interrogation.

*

I will not go further into the details that came out during the later proceedings.* Mason tried to the very end to insist that he only had joined *Ko-lao-hui* in order to spy on the society's plans, but to no avail.

Her British Majesty's Chief Justice in China and Japan read the sentence at the conclusion of the trial:

"Of course I have considered the depositions, and looking at them with the light of your statement and of the Crown Advocate's statement upon them, I can see I am in a proper position now to judge what the sentence upon you ought to be. No doubt this is not as serious a matter as it might have been. No doubt there is in it almost a childishness which reduces the gravity of the offence; but at the same time it is so grave in all its circumstances that it would be impossible for me to pass a nominal sentence. I do not forget that the charge is the carrying of dynamite; and I agree with the Crown Advocate that while that is the charge all the surrounding circumstances must be taken into consideration. It might be a very light offence; it might be a very grave one. This I conceive to be between the two. I take into consideration that confinement here in China is a much more serious punishment than it would be at home. I take into consideration also the loss of your position and the entire ruin of your career here in China. That that is completely ruined there can be no doubt; and if it were not ruined and it were possible for you to remain here, I should think it right to take steps to prevent you being here. I cannot under all the circumstances pronounce a less sentence than one of nine months' imprisonment, and I also include in the sentence that you find two sureties of 2,500 dollars each for your good behaviour from the expiry of your sentence. If

* [For the contemporary reports "google": "Chiyuen, Mason."]

you do not find them you will have to be deported. I also include in the sentence that you must pay the expenses of the trial and of your imprisonment."

All Europeans in China agreed that the sentence could not have been milder. If the English judge had further considered what disasters the young apprentice conspirator could have brought China if he had reached Chinkiang, then the 9 months prison sentence would have been a cutting mockery of the English justice system. Mason's crime was high treason against China, his adopted motherland. He was in the Chinese government's service. If his crime had been committed in England, Mason would have been sentenced – to *death*.

The Chinese government got an excellent diplomatic weapon through the young Englishman's treason, and Li Hung-chang knew how to make use of it. About a week after Mason's arrest, he sent a note to the legations and pointed out how ungentlemanly it was to use threats while revolutionary movements threatened the unity of the empire – especially since Mason and several other Europeans had fanned the flames.

This note is said to have made a strong impression on a couple of the ambassadors, and soon there were also other questions on the political horizon that finally broke up the Western powers' coalition.

There was considerable puzzlement over Li Hung-chang's passivity during the disturbances. This gentleman, who for the last 20 years had steered the Chinese ship of state clear of so many reefs, seemed to just smile derisively at the

emissaries' threats. While the European warships gathered along his country's coast, he sat quietly in his capital city of Tientsin and awaited the outcome of events. Not a regiment, not a single naval vessel was made ready for battle.

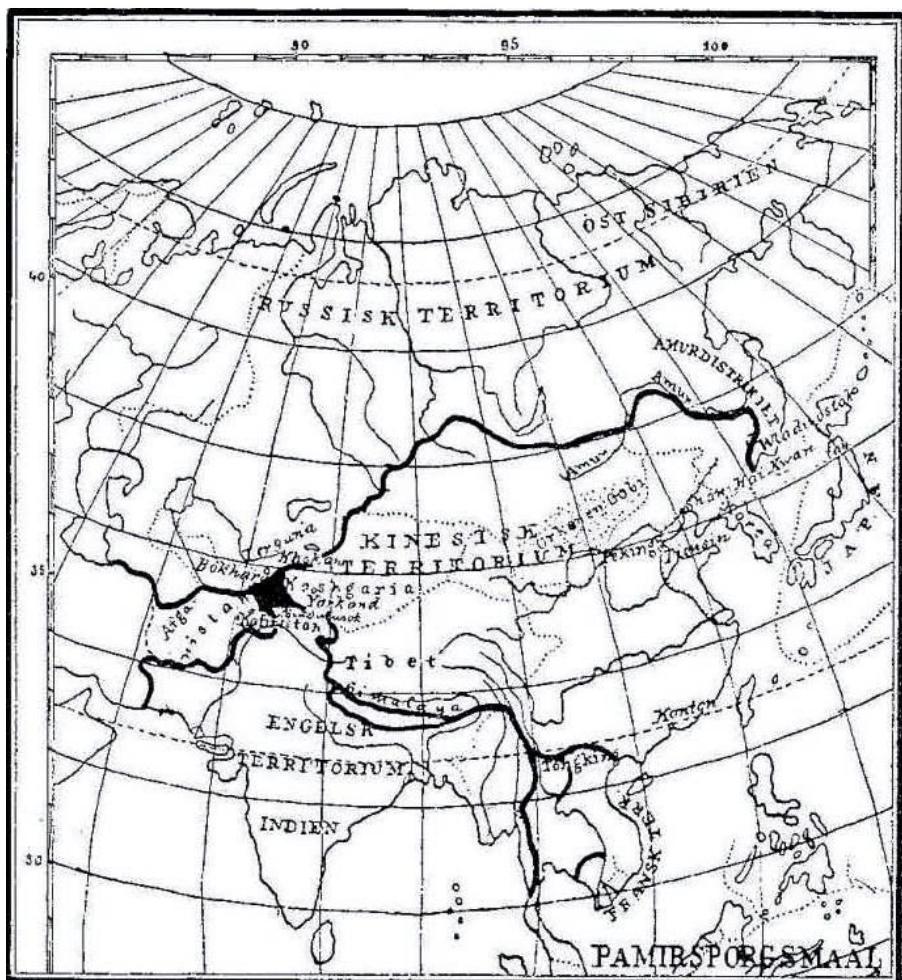
There were many who thought the great statesman had misjudged the seriousness of the situation. Others believed that the canny Chinese only waited on a favorable opportunity to overturn the dynasty and take the young Manchu emperor's place on the throne. The latter did not sound entirely implausible, and it might have been an easy matter for this gentleman, who only lacks the name of being this great nation's ruler.

But time showed that the old Li had neither lost his incisive political acumen nor aimed for the throne. His passive stance was dictated by other considerations.

The Chinese agents in Europe had got wind of that "the Egyptian question" soon would reappear and make a joint action in China impossible. The information came just at the right time – just after Mason's arrest, and to further split the European legations, the telegraph brought reports that two Englishmen on a reconnaissance mission in northeastern Pamir had met up with Russian scientific expedition protected by Cossacks, who forbade them to go further – because Pamir was Russian territory!

These border skirmishes that now rose between England and Russia played into Li Hung-chang's diplomatic game, and a couple of days later the coalition broke up. The Western powers' jealousies also this time averted a war, the results of which not even the most farseeing politician could predict.

*



The Pamir question.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

A closer consideration of the political conditions will readily show that a joint action against China must be considered an artificially constructed diplomatic house of cards that will collapse with the first breath of wind. It is a wonder that the Western powers' legations held together as long as they did. There still is something called public opinion, and every government is obliged to – at least officially – give some regard to this element in execution of its policies.

For example, how can one expect the Russians to support an armed action on behalf of the missionaries, when in Russia any proselytizing for any faith other than the Greek Orthodox is prohibited?

How could the Americans defend forcing China to protect American citizens, missionaries or businessmen, when they against all human rights and existing treaties refuse to allow peaceful Chinese workers entrance to their vast territory?

And the arch-Catholic Spain; how silly would not this country appear as defender of Protestant missionaries? And the French would look equally ridiculous, since they have evicted them from their African possessions.

There are still England and Germany. But here their divergent business interests would make any joint operation impossible. The English and the Germans are the principal rivals in the East-Asian markets, and the late events have shown how easy it is for the Chinese to split them up. The German envoy von Brandt was the first to abandon any armed intervention in the mission question. And why? Because the Germans were promised a larger share of war- and railroad materials!

England is the power most interested in the mission enterprise. English subjects provide the largest contingent of recruits and money to support the multitude of missionaries in China. But the English alone will hardly benefit by starting a war under cover of religion. The Russians might perhaps in return for a neutral stance make demands that could open their way to India by, for example, annexing the highlands of Pamir. Similarly, France might grab Siam, or move the border of French Indo-China with China up to Canton, whereby English trading interests would incur considerable losses.

In addition, it became apparent during the mission riots that public opinion in England by no means was in favor of any armed intervention on behalf of the missionaries. When the telegraph brought reports of the possibility of a joint operation by the major powers, almost all press publications advised against any action by the government that might damage trade relations between England and China. We may therefore assume that any warlike action on behalf of the missionaries is rather unlikely, though the disturbances at any time may make a sufficient *casus belli*, if one of the major powers should require such for its *business interests*.

Chapter Eight

2,500 kilometers up the Yangtze Kiang

We leave Shanghai – A brief description of the river's course – Yangtze pilots – Chinkiang and the "Emperor's Canal" – Nanking – The porcelain pagoda – Wuhu – Legends of the Orphan Rocks – Kiukiang.

We will now return to the gunboat "*Ling-Fêng*." After a few days stay in Shanghai, the Chief got orders to continue up the Yangtze Kiang together with the gunboat "*Fei-Hoo*." How far? This was still a secret, at least in "*Ling-Fêng's*" case, but "*Fei-Hoo's*" orders were to go to the treaty port Chinkiang; the city that Mr. Mason had found so boring.

On the 20th of September both ships left Shanghai and steamed up this mighty river, which flows through some of the most productive lands in Asia; a river that brings life with it to all.

And not only for the millions living along its shores. This main artery does not only provide the best means of travel and a wonderful trade route for the inhabitants, but it also has another, more pleasant task. Like its African sister its flooding waters also bring new life to the valleys and sun-

burned flats. The Yangtze valley, like the lands the Nile flows through, is among the most fertile regions on earth.

Let us see what the mighty river looks like from its source in Tibet and down to the ocean; from where its waters originally came.

Yangtze Kiang, or *Ta Kiang*, the Great River, has its beginnings in the highlands of Tibet. It stretches from 88° to 122° East in a sinuous length of ca. 7,500 kilometers, of which 5,000 are navigable.

The main stream is formed where 3 rivers come together at 94° East and 35° North. The width of the river here is ca. 1 kilometer in the rainy season, and the elevation is 4,300 meters above sea level. At this point Yangtze Kiang is separated from China's greatest river, *Huang Ho*, the Yellow River, only by the narrow mountain range *Bayan Kara*, whose melting snow feeds both rivers.

After having made a bend to the east, the river continues south down some gigantic waterfalls to the city Batang in Szechuan province. It has now left Tibet and flows eastward to the city Likiang in Yunnan, where it makes a half circle and meets the tributary Yalung River. Then the Yangtze makes another turn into Szechuan to the city Suchow.

Here it meets another large tributary, the Min River, which the Chinese consider to be the main river. This is because the Yangtze, which is here called *Kinsha Kiang* (the Gold Sands River), is only passable for ca. 100 kilometers above Suchow, while large *junks* can navigate the Min River all the way to Chingtu, Szechuan's capital, a distance of ca. 1,000 kilometers.

If old traditions and usage should be considered in the question of whether the Min is the main river or not, the Chinese opinion must be the right one. In a topographic work, more than 2,000 years old, it is stated that the Yangtze flows from the Min Mountains. Confucius is also said to have believed this to be the case.

After the junction with this river, the Yangtze runs ca. 750 kilometers in a northeasterly direction to Chungking, which lies at the mouth of the tributary Kialing, which comes from the north and carries all the exports from those regions. Chungking therefore is Szechuan's main commercial city.

In 1891 the city was opened for trade with foreign countries and is thus the newest and farthest up treaty port along the banks of the Yangtze Kiang.

The river then continues in the same direction to the city of Kweichow. Here the large flow of water is forced through narrow mountain passes and forms a number of rapids, which make the traffic difficult all the way down to the next treaty port at Ichang, and quite impossible in the summer when the current sometimes flows at up to 12 – 15 knots.

A little above Ichang the Yangtze emerges from its narrow constraints and runs as a majestic waterway in a southwesterly direction down through the province Hupei and on the way receives the surplus waters from Lake Tung Ting.

A little below, at the treaty port Hankow, yet another large tributary empties into the Yangtze; it is the Han River, which comes from the Tsingling Mountains and runs through the provinces Shensi and Hupei.

The course of the Yangtze for the last 1,500 kilometers first runs southeasterly down to the treaty port Kiukiang,

where it leaves Hupei and flows into Kiangsi. Here the river receives the overflows from Lake Poyang and continues on in a northeasterly direction to Wuhu, Nanking, and Chinkiang.

The Yangtze now becomes wider and wider and spreads its burden of sand and silt more evenly up against the many green-clad islands and plains that it has formed on its way to its home in the ocean.*

*

This is a quick sketch of Yangtze Kiang's path from the Tibetan plateau to the ocean in the east. We will now consider the 2,500 kilometers from the mouth of the river to Ichang in more detail as seen from "*Ling-Fêng's*" bridge.

The famous Venetian Marco Polo wrote in his book about his travels: "I assure my readers that Yangtze Kiang flows through more countries, and on its surface carries more ships and greater riches than all of Christianity's rivers and lakes combined. It is more like an ocean than a river."

His estimate of its commercial significance does not fit the present situation, but the last sentence is correct, at least with regard to the first couple of hundred kilometers, since the river's width here is very large. Due to the low height of the riverbanks, one can hardly see over to the other side.

Only the treetops can be seen of the large island Tsung Ming, which the river has created in the last several centuries. But these also soon disappear, since rain and fog close in and make the navigation upstream difficult.

* *Yangtze* means "Son of the Ocean."

"*Fei-Hoo*" is in the lead, since it has the pilot onboard.

These Yangtze pilots seem to feel where they are, even though the current makes all regular navigation impossible. During earlier voyages on the Yangtze Kiang, I would often stand on the bridge and observe these quiet, silent men as they serenely gave the steersman directions by hand signals, though I myself could not see 20 meters ahead through the fog or darkness.

Many years experience, yes.

That may well be, but even the most intelligent and quick-witted sailors never become good river pilots if they lack the inborn talent for piloting.

Have you read Mark Twain's description of "Life on the Mississippi"?

Then you will have a good idea of the difficulties the Yangtze pilots have to cope with. But it is also a very lucrative job even now, when the competition is so strong in all ways of life. The American, who is to bring "*Fei-Hoo*" up to Chinkiang and "*Ling-Fêng*" on up to Hankow, will be paid 2,000 *kroner*.*

The fog lifted in the afternoon. The sun came out, and now we steamed upstream under full power. That is not saying so much, since our maximum speed was only 9 to 10 knots, and one speedy riverboat after the other left us behind. But we could take that with a great deal of equanimity. No hurry, no mail, no goods onboard; only provisions and ammunition.

In the evening both ships went quietly to anchor to wait until the tide had gone out, since ebb and rise of the tide has

* [4 Norwegian *kroner* ~ 1 US dollar.]

significant influence on the strength of the current all the way up to Chinkiang, and coal had to be conserved if the supply on hand was to last up to Hankow.

The next day we saluted the strong forts by the city of Kiang Yin, where the river narrows to a couple of kilometers wide. Here, an enemy squadron will have the doubtful joys of passing by the muzzles of 67 cannon plus a strong net of mines. During the Tongking War of 1884 everything was ready to receive the French, if they should try to force a passage.

Farther up, we also meet a row of forts – those that *Ko-lao-hui* were to have captured if Mason had managed to get up to Chinkiang with his "steel goods."

Late in the afternoon the ships went to anchor in this treaty port's harbor, but it was not so late that we missed enjoying the sight of the beautiful Silver Island, just as the last rays of the sun said goodbye.

The island lies in the middle of the river a couple of kilometers below the harbor and is considered one of Yangtze Kiang's points to see. It is covered with evergreen trees from the river's edge to the top. In between there are several Buddhist temples to be seen, and up on top this peaceful peak is crowned by a small pagoda – the whole as idyllic and picturesque as possible.

Chinkiang is one of the seven ports that were "opened" after the 2nd Opium War in 1861. The city is one of China's most important trade centers with combined exports and imports of ca. 3 million tons* and a sales volume of ca. 17.5 million dollars.



Silver Island.

[Actually, "Little Orphan Rock"]

It is a wonder that the numbers are not larger, since Chinkiang has a uniquely favorable location. The surrounding area is not only unusually fertile, but the city is also

* This does not include the *junk* trade, which amounts to ca. 3½ million tons.

readily connected to several of the richest provinces by means of *Yun Ho*, or the "Emperor's Canal," which intersects with the Yangtze Kiang here.

Yun Ho was completed in the thirteenth century by the powerful Mongol emperor Kublai Khan and has been a great blessing for the provinces the canal traverses. Its primary purpose was to supply Peking and the northern districts with rice from the fertile regions along the banks of the Yangtze Kiang.

In later years the coastal steamers have taken over the rice transportation, and the government then thought it could be less punctilious about maintaining the canals. But this approach almost caused a famine in northern China during the Tongking War, since the French with their fast cruisers prevented any importation of rice. If the Grand Canal had been operational, the Chinese could have laughed at the French blockade. But it was not; and this fact had much to do with the quick end to the war.

From Chunkiang, *Yun Ho* continues south past several large cities and is connected to Shanghai by the Wusung River. This stretch sees an extremely lively traffic. It is especially the cheap wares that are transported in this way.

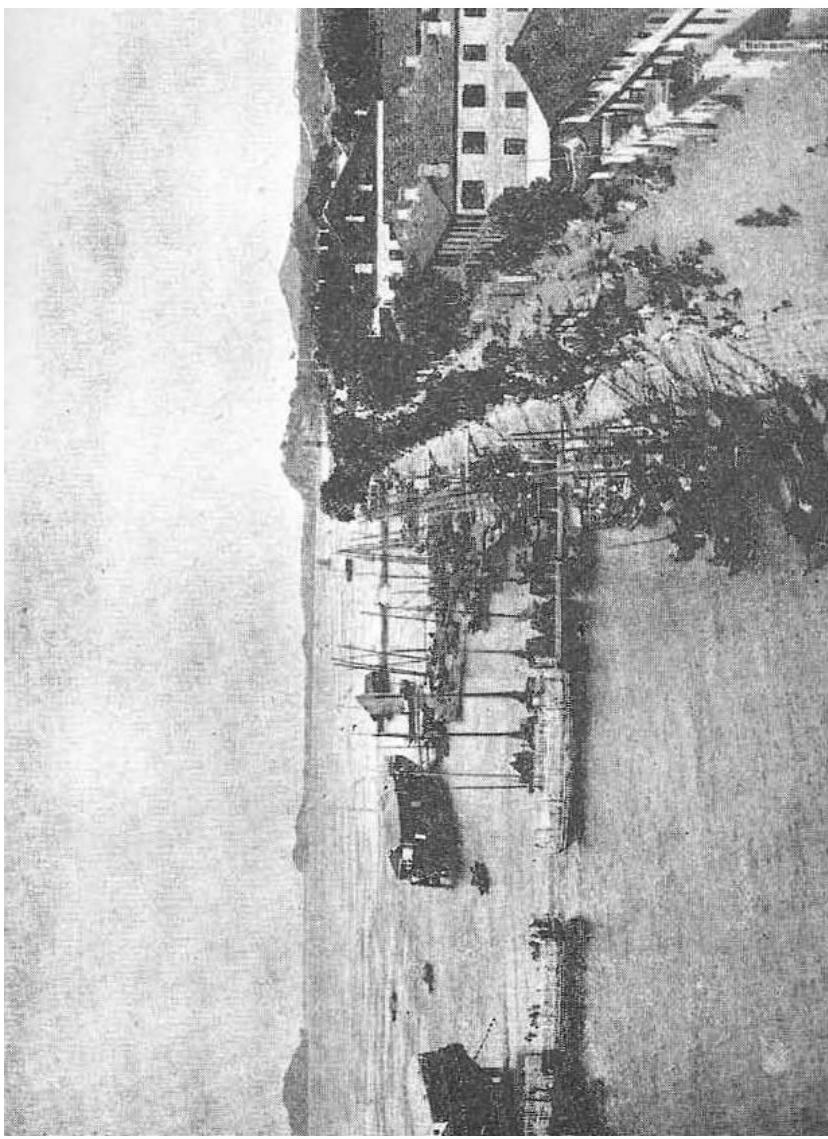
Our stay in Chinkiang only lasted a few hours. I therefore did not have an opportunity to go sight-seeing, and the ferment among the inhabitants did not especially invite to that kind of diversions anyway. But I still went on a trip ashore and took a ferryboat over to Golden Island to see the magnificent temples there. The island, or rather the peninsula, since it is connected to the mainland by a small tongue of land – lies close by the European settlement.

A clean-shaven monk, whom I meet at the ferry landing, immediately offered to act as *cicerone*, since he probably knew from experience that the foreign barbarians always put a couple of silver coins in the offering box.

After passing through some labyrinthian temple courtyards and safely dodging a couple of angry dogs, we came into the *sanctum sanctorum*. Here a score of monks were occupied reading mass and apparently did not like this unexpected intrusion. But my guide went over to the abbot and whispered a little in his ear. This seemed to have a quieting effect, and they immediately went back to murmuring prayers and swinging incense censers with renewed vigor.

Meanwhile I took a look around the temple hall. "Asia's Light," the great Buddha, sat under a glass roof with crossed arms and half-closed eyes. His most eminent apostles stood around him, and a depiction of the Buddhist paradise carved in wood formed the background. This tableau *could* have been attractive, but the many garish colors did not work as appealing on my nerves as on the crowd of believers, who kneeling looked up to the sculptures with rapt devotion.

We then passed through a couple of lesser temples and finally reached the top of the small island. Here stood a dilapidated old pagoda, where visitors in the past enjoyed the wonderful view over the river and the beautiful green grasslands. But since the tower is now much too decrepit to be entered, we had to be content with taking a seat in the pavilion that stands next to it.



Chinkiang - The European settlement.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

In the evening "*Ling-Fêng*" raised anchor and steamed alone up the Yangtze Kiang. "*Fei-Hoo*" was to stay in Chinkiang for a while in order to be on hand in case *Ko-lao-hui* should think of attacking the settlement.

The long and narrow Deer Island, which divides the river into two arms, lies above the city. We chose the northernmost, where the current is less strong, and passed by Ichang [Yizheng], which is known for its salt trade. A fleet of several hundred *junks* lay at anchor in the harbor. They carry this valuable commodity further up the Yangtze or in through the numerous canals.

The salt trade is a government monopoly and one of the State's most important sources of income. In order to control the consumption, there are only a score of cities in all of China where salt-making is allowed. Because of this, salt smuggling is a very widespread profession and also very profitable, since the tax is almost 100%.

"*Ling-Fêng*" passed the large fortifications at Yentse Ki later in the night, and at dawn we caught sight of China's old capital city.

The city itself cannot be seen from the river; only the grey, imposing walls that runs over several ridges near the shore. It was inside of these walls with their memories of past glories that the leader of the Taiping rebels let himself be proclaimed China's emperor in 1852. His armies' victorious march from Canton in the south to Tientsin in the north might be said to have justified this step by the Christian convert. But fate would otherwise. The Taiping rebels' dreams ended with the death of Hung Siu-tsuen and the fall of Nanking in 1864, and the Manchu dynasty got another lease on life.

Prince Kung's* words on receiving the message about his opponent's death characterize the horrors of this long civil war: "There are no words to express all the misery and suffering that Hung has brought to the realm."



The Porcelain Pagoda.

The Porcelain Pagoda was among the many historic buildings that were destroyed in Nanking. When Yung-lo, the 3^d emperor of the Ming dynasty, moved his residence from Nanking to Peking in 1410, he ordered the construction of a

* Prince Kung, who at present is Prime Minister, was a member of the regency during Emperor Tung-chih's minority in 1864.

pagoda dedicated to the memory of his late mother, and the splendid structure that was erected over 20 years must be said to have been a worthy offering on love's altar. It is said to have cost about 10 million *kroner*. The pagoda was ca. 100 meters high, and it was 16 meters in radius at ground level. The walls were covered with the finest white porcelain on the outside, but since the edges of each level was adorned with green tiles, the whole pagoda got a greenish sheen.

The 10 meters high spire bore a shiny metal ball at its top, and 5 precious pearls were inset in the roof as amulets to protect Nanking from all evil. The inside walls were covered with black porcelain tiles and each of these was embellished with a gilded picture of Buddha in bas-relief.

The pagoda was illuminated by 140 lamps at night, and the musical sound of bells was heard all over the city when the wind blew. It came from 152 bells that were hung from each corner of the 9 levels.

One would think that such a national monument from the beloved Emperor Yung-lo's time would be respected by the Taiping rebels, but these fanatics, who believed themselves called by God to eradicate all idolatry from the earth, were no more inclined to reverence than the iconoclasts of the Netherlands, and Nanking's pride shared the fate of so many similar buildings.

One of the reasons for destroying the pagoda was that large flocks of Buddhists made pilgrimages to the pagoda because they believed a monk a couple of thousand years ago had buried one of Buddha's bones in the place the pagoda was built on.

Nanking still has not overcome the consequences of the hard war years. The old capital city is only a shadow of its old splendor. In the past it was one of the foremost seats of knowledge and famous for its manufacture of silks and porcelain, but these peaceful occupations have much declined in later years, thanks to the Europeans' aggressive behavior, and have been supplanted by more warlike pursuits.



Ruins of the Porcelain Pagoda.

In 1875 construction was begun on a large arsenal under supervision by an Englishman, Sir Halliday Macartney*, and a couple of thousand workers are now engaged in producing

* Sir Halliday Macartney is at present employed as attaché at the Chinese legation in London. In this capacity he has done a great service for his adopted motherland.

the most modern weapons of war, which the Chinese hope eventually will help them quash the humiliating treaty signed in Nanking in 1842.

"*Ling-Fêng*" continued steaming upstream, and soon the old capital city was out of sight. At noon we passed through a narrow stretch formed by a couple of cliffs on each side of the river. They have the descriptive name of Two Pillars. Here too there are strong fortifications to block the way for enemy ships.

Shortly after having saluted these forts, we arrived at the treaty port Wuhu, where the mission disturbances began.

I went ashore as soon as the vessel had anchored. The European settlement lies on some small heights and is not very large, since the whole population consists of only half a hundred missionaries, consuls, and customs officers. The Catholic mission buildings, which the rabble had destroyed, still lay in ruins, but the damage indemnity had been paid, and the whole station was to be rebuilt during the winter.

Near the settlement runs a small canal, which connects the Chinese city to the river. Like Chinkiang, Wuhu has an excellent commercial location. Canal systems connect it to almost all the large trade centers in Anhui province. The total trade volume amounts to ca. 38 million *kroner* and a declared import and export volume of $2\frac{3}{4}$ million tons, not including the *junk* shipping, which also amounts to $2\frac{3}{4}$ million tons.

Larger ships must anchor in the harbor, but the river steamers can go right up to the banks, where, like in Chinkiang, a number of old hulks are moored and serve as both piers and storage facilities.

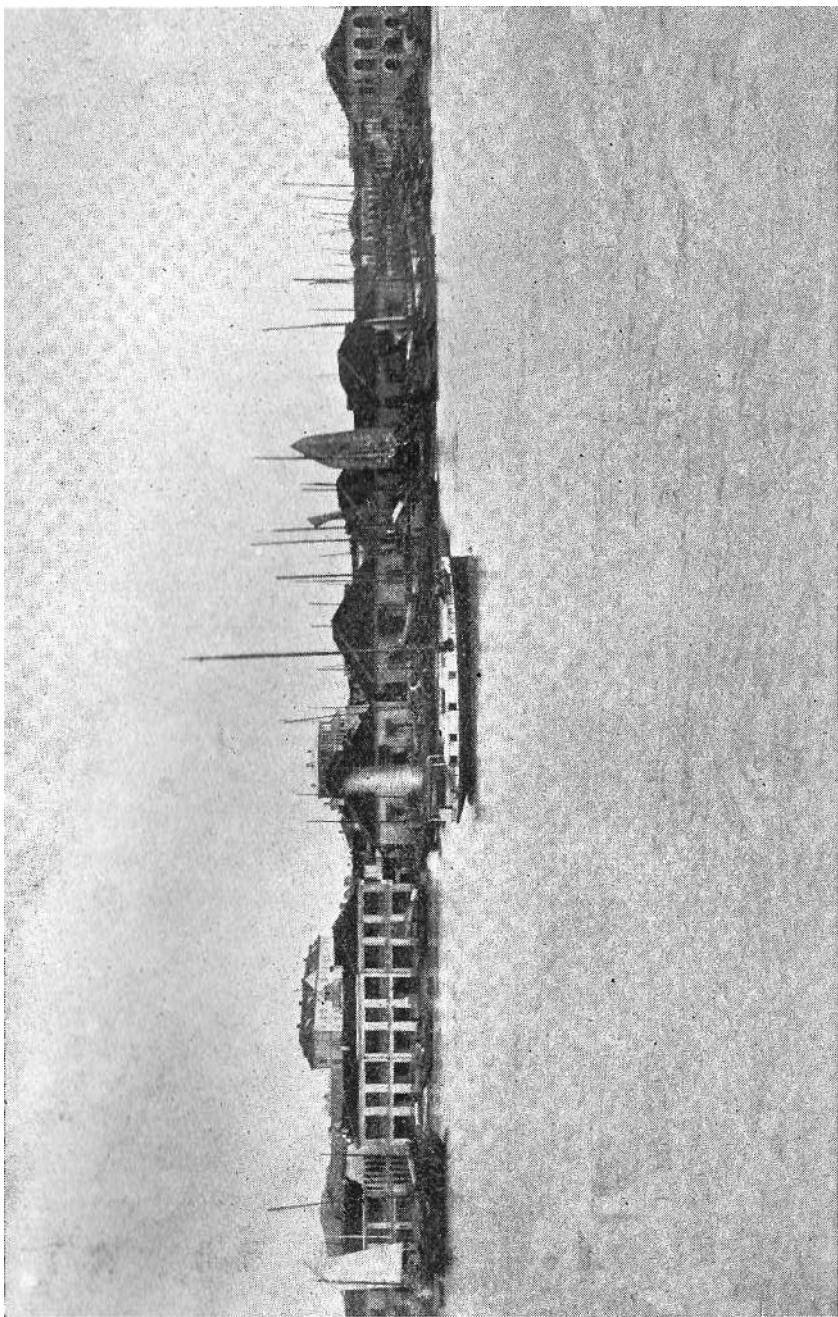
After having paid a flying visit to the customs director, I took a stroll down along the river through the almost continuous row of rice paddies. I wanted to see the beautiful American mission station, which several of the European colonials called "the Sanatorium." And I must say that these Americans have managed to arrange themselves very comfortably for missionaries. The station, which lies on an airy rise near the riverbank, consists of two palatial brick villas with a quite modest chapel and hospital off to the side and the whole area surrounded by a high masonry wall.

According to what I was told, the "Sanatorium's" inhabitants had sensibly left the heathen Chinese to their fate. The servants were the only connection they had with the native population. If this was really so, I will not swear to, though at an earlier visit to Wuhu, I had only found the missionary families and their servants on the station. But I can easily imagine that several of the colonials also could wish to be missionaries and live in the "Sanatorium" rather than in their own more modest dwellings.

Late in the evening "*Ling-Fêng*" continued on its way upriver. In the night we met a swarm of *junks* as thick as grasshoppers heading downstream. Fortunately there was moonlight and clear weather, or I think we would have had to anchor up to avoid collisions.

Many of these *junk* skippers are far too economical in their use of oil and do not carry lanterns. Only wave a torch when they are half a hundred meters before the bow. Some seem inclined to match strength with us and refuse to alter their course. The pilot swears and bellows, the Chinese yell, but it

Wuhu.



(This page intentionally left blank.)

is "*Ling-Fêng*" that must always give way*. Sometimes we have to steer so close to the riverbank that the ship is in danger of running aground at any moment.

The swarm of *junks* lessened in the morning, and now we went "full ahead" past one pagoda and city wall after the other.

At midnight "*Ling-Fêng*" stops outside Ngangking. Like Nanking, this important trade center is not a treaty port, but steamships still are allowed to stop to take on or unload freight. The city walls runs right down to the riverbank and appear to go on forever. The seven-level pagoda nearby looks very elegant and is better maintained than most of the others we have passed by.

At dawn we pass by Christmas Island and some small half inundated islands. For some time "*Ling-Fêng*" runs so close to shore that we can observe the farmers *Leben und Treiben* close up.

A dreamlike pastoral peace seems to rule over this region. Children in more or less paradisal state of dress play and run around on the farms among dogs and pigs. The women sit quietly out on the front steps and sew or chat, while the men are busy plowing the fertile fields, which the flood has just left, and numerous *junks* gliding slowly down with the current give life to the wonderful landscape.

After "*Ling-Fêng*" has passed the city of Tunglu with its deteriorated walls and pagodas; about 2 o'clock we are near to one of Yangtze Kiang's most beautiful areas.

* [That is the rule of the sea; a powered ship must give way to sailing vessels.]

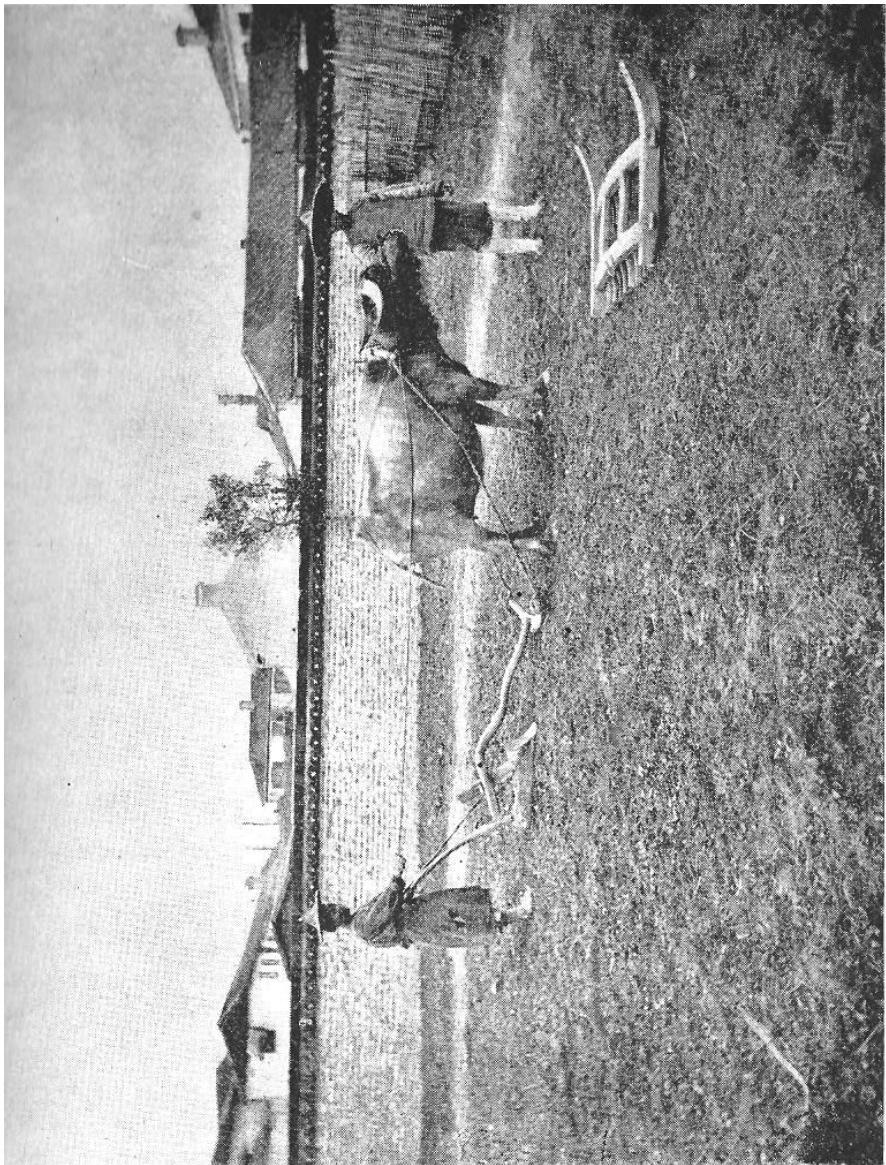
The majestic stream narrows to a couple of kilometers. On the right bank lies the city Kingtse Shan behind a high granite cliff, which goes right down to the riverbed. A remarkable little island, covered with trees, towers up a hundred meters high about in the middle of the stream. It is the famous Little Orphan Rock.

We get a better look at it after we have passed the cliff. A Buddhist temple of rare beauty surrounded by bamboo trees lies halfway up to the top. A zigzag path leads up to it, and it looks to be well visited, since several small *junks* lie moored by the small pier.

A short distance above Little Orphan Rock, we get another city in sight. It is Hweilung, which has the honor of being the famous Li Hung-chang's birthplace. He grew up here under very straitened circumstances together with his brother, Li Han-chang, viceroy of Canton. It was only an insignificant little place then, but as the two brothers rose in rank, Hweilung also prospered thanks to their beneficence, and it is now surrounded by new, massive walls that reach across some steep mountain tops, since the brothers intend to make their ancestral home a major city.

The border between the provinces Anhui, Hupei, and Kiangsi is near here. The river now runs through Kiangsi for a while and passes by the strongly fortified city Hukow, where Yangtze Kiang meets one of China's largest lakes, Poyang, which is famous for the natural beauty of its surrounding terrain.

The men are busy plowing the fertile fields.



(This page intentionally left blank.)

Lake Poyang receives the flow from the Kan, Siu, and several smaller rivers and forms a kind of reservoir for Kiangsi's surplus waters. The lake is very shallow, but when the Yangtze Kiang sends a mighty flow of water into Lake Poyang in the summertime, a very busy traffic begins between the heavily populated cities along its shores. Even the largest *junks* then have deep enough water.

Now, toward the end of September, these have been replaced by their smaller, flat-bottomed sisters, which hardly stick deeper into the water than a few inches. Whole fleets of such vessels lie by the mouth. Like all riverboats, "*Ling-Fêng*" also stops here for a moment to replenish its water supplies. The boundary between the lake's clean, clear water and Yangtze's muddy stream is very sharp, and by running a ship's length over to the clear side one can fill up with pure, delicious drinking water.

When "*Ling-Fêng*" had gone a little farther up and come just opposite the opening to the lake, we caught sight of a isolated little island that pokes up out of the water in there with a pagoda on top. This is Great Orphan Rock, or Shoe Rock, as it is also called. The Chinese have an old legend about this rock and the aforementioned Little Orphan Rock, which I will take the liberty of quoting:

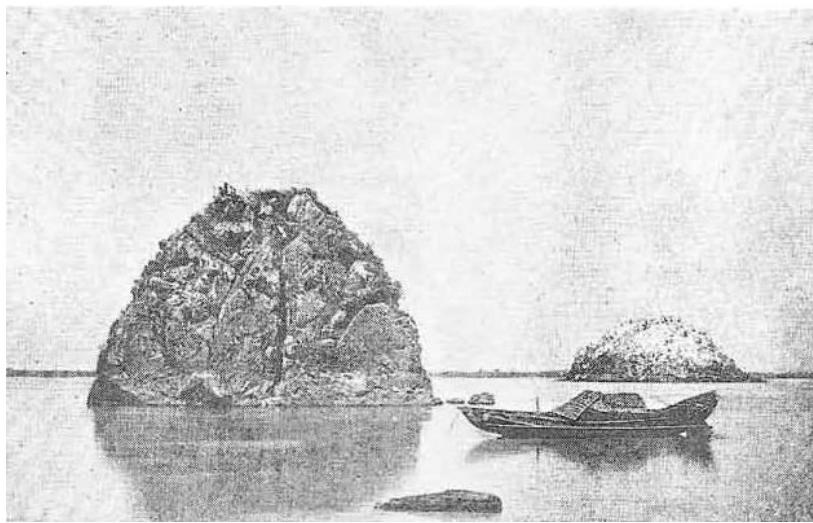
"Near the place where the Little Orphan now rises above the water, a boat once turned over in a raging storm. In the boat were a man and his wife with two small daughters. The parents drowned, but the children were able to climb up on the back of a large tortoise that had just popped up from the water.

The animal carried them a distance up the river, but the youngest soon became tired and slid down from the tortoise's back. Where she disappeared, a small island raised itself out of the water, and it was later called Little Orphan Rock.

The tortoise continued swimming, but when it had gotten partway into Lake Poyang, the oldest girl also became too tired and sank below the waves. There another little island rose up out of the water, and it became known as Great Orphan Rock.

The tortoise continued on its way, but its strength was soon exhausted, and as it gave up the ghost, it too was transformed into a rock."

This is the so-called Tortoise Rock, but it lies so low on the water that we had to use binoculars to find it.



Great Orphan and Tortoise Rock

The following legend is told about the origin of the name Shoe Rock, which is also used for Great Orphan Rock:

"A fisherman lost his fish trap by the Little Orphan one day and could not find it again for however hard he tried.

In his distress he turned to one of the priests on the island and begged him for advice. The monk promised to help and gave him a paper inscribed with prayers, which he was to attach to his forehead and then dive under the water. The fisherman did this, and not only did he see his fish trap, but also an enchanting mermaid, who had laid herself down to sleep on the river bottom with his trap as pillow.

The poor fisherman had never seen a so lovely and captivating woman. He long stood enthralled by this astonishing sight, but when he got his senses back, he decided to take with him a memento of this marvelous moment. He quickly slipped the shoe off one of the mermaid's tiny feet, grabbed the trap with his other hand, and ascended to the surface again.

The mermaid, who so suddenly had lost her pillow, woke up, and when she discovered that one of her shoes were gone, she immediately went after the thief.

Although the fisherman had a long head start, she steadily gained on him, and when they had got a ways into Lake Poyang, he did not see any other way to save himself than to throw the shoe away from him, and in that place an isolated little rock spit, shaped like a woman's shoe, later rose up out of the water. This is why it came to be called *Shea-koo-shan*, or in English, Shoe Rock."

The treaty port Kiukiang lies on the other side and there we went to anchor late in the evening.

This city is the central point for all exports from and imports to Kiangsi province, since Kiangsi is surrounded on three sides by high mountain chains, which hinder almost all dealings with the neighboring provinces. Yangtze Kiang thus becomes Kiangsi's main trade route, though it has only two cities on this river; Kiukiang and the fortified garrison town Hukow.

Kiukiang was a very populous city in the past, but it was almost entirely destroyed in the Taiping rebellion, and it now had only 50,000 inhabitants, of which half a hundred are Europeans.

Its trade volume amounts to ca. 45 million *kroner* with an in- and out declared tonnage of $2\frac{1}{2}$ million tons^{*}.

Early the next morning, I took a long walk on the well-maintained city walls, from which one can get a good view of the city and its surrounding area. It is easy to see that Kiukiang once was a large city, since wherever we look we see green fields, orchards, and rice paddies. But it probably will not be long before these again are covered with rows of houses, especially since the planned railroad from Canton will bring the overland trade to Kiukiang's merchants.

The city's environs consist of a single chain of ridges and valleys with lush vegetation and a beautiful background of high mountains. A number of Europeans have built small villas up there, where they can stay in the hot summer.

About noon "*Ling-Fêng*" again steams upriver through a swarm of *junks* that become denser and denser as we approach Wusueh. This port, like Ichang, has an enormous

* This does not include the *junk* tonnage, which is also estimated at ca. $2\frac{1}{2}$ million tons.

export of the precious salt, which all of these *junks* carry down through the Yangtze valley.

It was in Wusueh that the two Englishmen were killed when the Protestant mission buildings were destroyed.

Chapter Nine

Arrival in Hankow – *"Ling-Fêng"* is ordered to Ichang – Hankow –
Tea and tea drinking – Chang Chih-tung – Farther up the Yangtze Kiang –
Ichang.

The next evening *"Ling-Fêng"* dropped anchor outside central China's most important commercial center, the great treaty port Hankow. We had traveled 1,500 kilometers up the river and thought that the long journey now would be at an end. But this was not the case, since the next day the Chief received orders to provision and then continue farther up to Ichang [Yichang].

We had heard some loose rumors about the possibility of such a tour, but we still were quite surprised by this order, since *"Ling-Fêng"* was hardly the best suited vessel to send up against such strong currents and shallow waters as on the upper Yangtze.

But *somebody* had to go up there, since after the rabble-rousers had burned down the European settlement on the 2nd of September, more trouble could be expected from *Ko-lao-hui* at any time.

A company of English marines had been sent up there on a hired river steamer, but this arrangement could only be considered an emergency measure, if the insurgents should

attempt an attack on the customs officials and missionaries that were still present in Ichang.

The English gunboats "*Archer*" and "*Swift*" also had come up to Hankow, but since they drew even more water than "*Ling-Fêng*," these ships could not be sent up.

For my part, I had no objections against this trip; quite to the contrary. If "*Ling-Fêng*" managed to get up to Ichang, the water level would soon fall so low that it would be impossible to sail down again until spring, and a six month stay in China's center would give me a marvelous opportunity to study the people close up.

Hankow lies, as the name implies, by the mouth of the Han River, where this large tributary joins the Yangtze Kiang.

The Han springs, as mentioned before, from the foothills of the Tsingling mountain chain and runs in a southwesterly direction all the way through the Hupei province. In the summertime the river is passable for small *junks* for ca. 700 kilometers upstream, and with help from its numerous tributaries all possible kinds of goods are spread over the adjacent areas, even all the way up to Shensi's capital city, Singan, which lies ca. 1,600 kilometers from Hankow.

Nature has spread her richest gifts over the landscape the Han River runs through. Here there is a temperate climate, fertile soils with luxurious vegetation, and all kinds of minerals. When eventually the planned continental railway from Peking to Canton over Hankow is constructed through this region, and steamships are allowed to sail up the Han

River, then the Hupei province may be able to support twice as large a population as it does now*

The commercial significance of the Han is easily understood when one hears that at its mouth lie three cities with a combined population of 2 to 3 million. They are Hanyang on the same side as Hankow and Wuchang on Yangtze Kiang's right bank.



The *Bund*, Hankow.

Hankow is China's most important treaty port after Shanghai and Canton and has an annual trade volume of nearly 160 million *kroner*.

The European settlement, which lies along the riverbank, is like a small model city that the colonials can be proud of. Nothing is spared to give the place as elegant and splendid an appearance as possible.

* Hupei has ca. 32 million inhabitants.

A stroll along *The Bund* is a delight that no visitor should miss, especially at dusk, when a refreshing breeze from the river wafts in over the shore. *The Bund* is a 3 – 4 kilometer long boulevard stretching along the shore. On one side there is a row of handsome brick villas surrounded by flower gardens, where missionaries, consuls, and merchant princes have established their residences. There are green grass medians in the middle of the boulevard and lawn tennis courts along the river side.

Turning toward the river we see a multitude of *junks* and *sampans* crossing in all directions, and over on the other shore the outline of Wuchang's high city walls with watch-towers and fortifications.

Now, in October, it is quite peaceful in Hankow. The daily steamer from Shanghai carries almost all correspondence with the outer world. But when the tea season begins in May there will be a different kind of life along the wharves and out on the river. It is important to be the first to come to market, and there sometimes can be a score of steamships lying in the harbor waiting to take onboard their precious cargo. Hankow annually exports ca. 35 to 40 million kilograms tea. Most of it goes to London and Odessa. It is brought to the latter place by the large state-supported ships, which Russia annually sends to Sakhalin and Vladivostok with war matériel and criminals.

The treaty port regrettably still does not have any docks. Nor are the majestic quays constructed such that ships can lay up alongside. They slope sharply up from the riverbed and are mainly designed to prevent bank erosion and overland flooding. The difference up here between Yangtze Kiang's

highest and lowest water surface is usually ca. 17 meters. In 1887 it was even larger, and since the height of the revetments was insufficient to cope, the whole settlement was flooded and they had to use rowboats in the streets. On the racetrack, they even had small boat races.

Since the loading cannot be done directly from the quays, there are, like in the other river ports, some old hulks lying at anchor a little outside and serve as tenders, but since there are not enough of these in the busiest season, several ships must anchor out in the harbor, which is associated with some risk as the current is very strong, and the anchors often slip on the bottom. Despite these obstacles the ship traffic is quite substantial. In the last year the treaty port has been visited by ca. 700 steamships and 400 sailing ships.

*

*

*

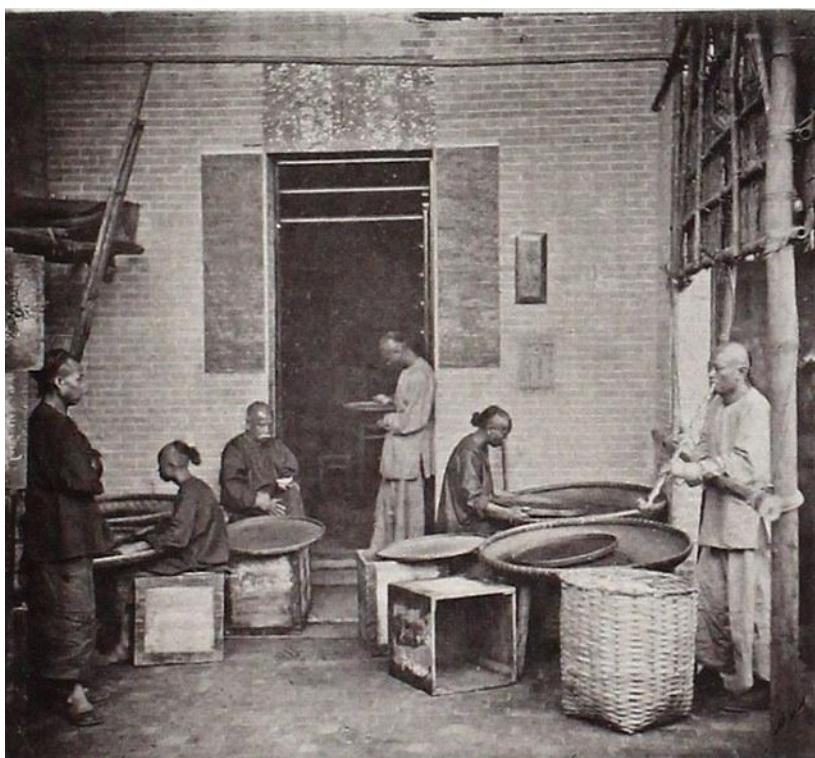
Since we are in the center of the tea trade, I will write a little about tea and tea drinking.

Anglo-Saxons and jaded youths on the "grand tour" like a whiskey and soda, the German prefers his beer, and the Chinese wants *wan sha* – a cup of tea.

There are historical accounts of tea cultivation in China as far back as 2000 B.C., but according to legend the Emperor Shing Kung, who lived 1,000 years earlier, was the first to discover the qualities of the plant. He accidentally hung a tea bush over a pot of boiling water and several of the leaves fell off into the pot – and soon tea was known wide around.

Shing Kung, who is also called "the Divine Farmer," is the patron saint of Chinese farmers, since he also is said to have invented the plow and thus transformed the old nomadic tribe into farmers.

Since ancient times the Chinese rulers have sent gifts of tea to their vassals and admirers. The princes of India and Japan appear to have been the most favored.



Sorting tea leaves.

A gift that was once sent to the Sultan of Ceylon was described as follows: "The tea weighed 20 kg., and each leaf

was of the perfect size, color, and age. The leaves were divided into packets of about 100 g. each and encased in silver packaging, which again were wrapped with thin, white paper and placed in colored silk bags. These were then placed in a porcelain vase whose lid was closed and sealed. Then the vase was set down into a camphor chest furnished with silver hinges and finely worked inlays."

These presents of tea have preserved the names of many rulers, whose identities otherwise would have been lost to history. The officials in charge of making up and delivering the presents made notes regarding the recipients that give historians many interesting tidbits of information. They tell us that countries such as Korea, Manipur, Assam, and Tongking once were flourishing states; that Cambodia and Cochinchina had large, civilized populations that in many ways could keep up with their Chinese masters. Further, the researcher will find that Ceylon was ruled for centuries by brave, intelligent princes, who regularly followed one after the other like ocean waves, and from the north Genghis Khan and Tamerlane's ancestors sent tribute to their Chinese overlords, who in return sent the uncivilized sons of the Mongolian steppes gifts of tea with which to flavor their cold Siberian water.

By the time of Confucius, tea had quite displaced all other beverages. Its universal use is illustrated by his directive to his disciples: "Be kind and courteous to all, even to people from foreign lands. If someone is thirsty, give them a cup of tea without requiring payment."

One of the great master's contemporaries wrote of the national drink as follows; "It is better than wine, since it is not

intoxicating. Nor does it cause people to do stupid things that are regretted when sober again. Tea is better than water, since it does not carry diseases with it, which water often does when putrefied substances poison the wells."

The nation has taken the words of these wise men to heart. If you visit a Chinese home – be it but a lowly hut – the mistress of the house will greet you with: "*Ching hsien sheng wan sha.*" ("If you please, Sir, a cup of tea?") One would think that a "civilized" European would always respond by receiving the offered cup with thanks, but regrettably I have often witnessed the contrary, and the dwelling's residents have had their notion of the Western barbarians reinforced.

It is not only to visitors that the Chinese show their hospitality. Outside all inns and larger merchant houses there is a large jar with tea water and cups alongside such that "all who are thirsty can have a cup without payment."

There was a lively tea trade with foreign countries long before the Birth of Christ. There are historical accounts of Chinese vessels, equipped with the "north and south needle"*, bringing cargoes of tea to Japan, Tongking, Siam, India, Ceylon, Persia, and the "fortunate" Arabia. The ships sailed from here west to a flat river country that was only separated from Arabia by a shallow sea, and this must, of course, have been Egypt. These reports have been confirmed in our time by finds of Chinese porcelain in Egyptian funeral chambers. Caravans carried tea along the trade routes of the Asian mainland.

China had a monopoly in the tea trade right up to 1838, but then tea plants were brought to India and planted there.

* The magnetic needle was first mentioned in China's history in 1122 B.C.

The rise of this dangerous competition can best be shown with numbers. In 1839 the first harvest – 250 kg. – was exported to England, and in 1894 the volume had reached ca. 75 million kg., or about half as much as the total volume exported from all of China.

The Japanese have also planted tea bushes to an astonishing extent in recent times, and it looks like Japan and India together may soon become dominant in the tea market, since China's tea exports have not increased at all since 1880. The primary reason for this state of things is that the Indians and the Japanese produce tea both more economically and with better care than the Chinese. In addition, the Chinese export duty is too high. The Japanese pay only one fourth as much and the Indians nothing at all. Until these faults are corrected, the Chinese will day by day see themselves more and more shut out of the tea export market. The end will be like in the fable about the man who owned a goose that laid gold eggs. The Chinese tea certainly is the best, but in the long run the average person will prefer the Indian or Japanese teas, when these can be had for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the price.

Tea is usually grown on higher terrain and thrives best in sandy soils. It resembles myrtle in appearance, has serrated, dark green, leathery leaves, and when fully grown is nearly 2 meters high. Growing tea is not labor intensive; the plant requires neither tending nor watering. When the bush is 3 to 4 years old, the first leaves are plucked in early April. This provides the finest kind of tea. There is a second harvest in June, and sometimes there can be a third harvest where the soils are more than usually favorable for the plant. Each bush occupies ca. 2 square meters and produces on average 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$

kg. green leaves annually, or ca. $\frac{1}{2}$ kg. dried tea @ ca $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents US. The weather has a large influence on the quality. Too much rain turns the leaves yellow, and too much sun slows the growth.



Pressing the tannin out of tea leaves.

When the harvest is collected, the tea is dried in the sun on woven bamboo mats and gently rolled around until red

spots appear on the leaves. They are then placed in cotton bags, which usually are placed in wooden boxes with many holes. A man then steps with his full weight on the bags, and a green, bitter fluid called tannin runs out of the holes.

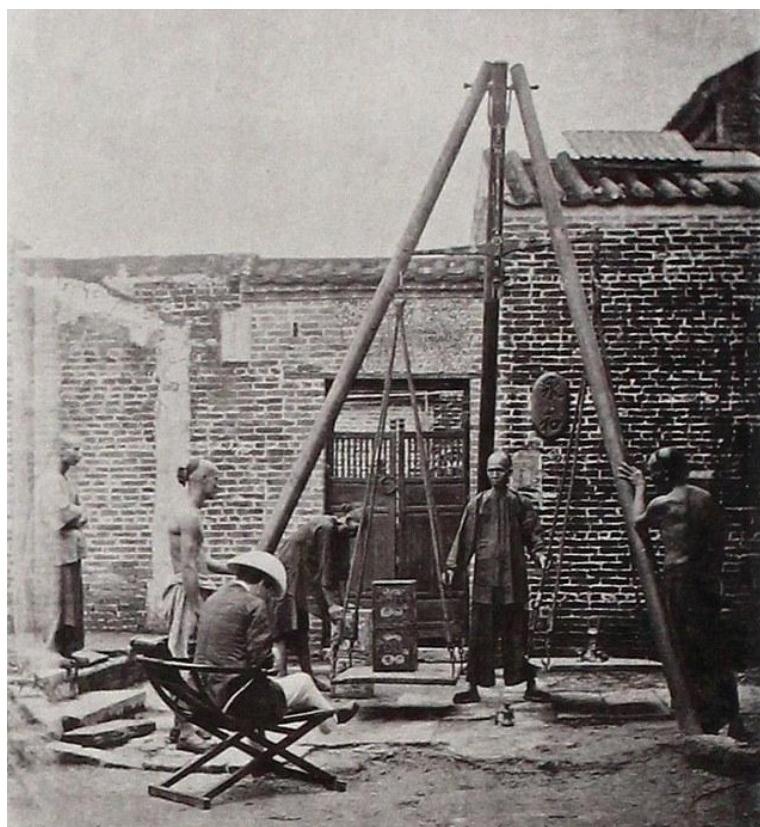
After this the tea must be fermented, and this is done by placing it in baskets, which are covered to keep the warmth in. When 3 – 4 hours have passed, this is the last process from the grower's side. Then the agents for the large Chinese and European tea firms come and buy up the whole harvest, which is then sorted and prepared for exportation.

All the larger European companies usually send a so-called tea taster to the market towns. Thousands of dollars stand at risk if this gentleman's taste buds are not in order. He must neither smoke nor drink spirits. But this abstinence pays off well and the working season is only 3 – 4 months a year. Some of the best known tea tasters make up to 3,000 dollars per working month.

Finally we will cast a quick glance into one of China's innumerable tea houses, which take the place of the European dram shops. No raucous, brutal, raving animals in here, even though the customers are of the working class. There are none of the disgusting scenes that sometimes occur in Portuguese or English taverns. Civilization's "firewater" has not yet got a foothold in the vigorous Chinese nation. The West can keep this blessing for itself, this plague, which poisons millions of happy homes.

We seat ourselves at one of the round wooden tables on the first or second floor of the tea house. On the walls hang colored and gilded pictures with passages from Confucius or some other Chinese sages' works – an alternate for the liquor

distillers' advertisements. Some workers enjoying a cup of tea and some dried fruits after the day's work are seated around the tables. At the end of the room is the kitchen with some enormous pots over the fire. The waiters come with empty cups. A pinch of tea is thrown in; the cook pours hot water over it, and the tea is ready. The guests drink the boiling hot tea at once – not as in Europe a quarter hour later. Thus the bitter taste that often marks the "strong" tea made by European housewives is avoided.



A European agent notes the weight of the tea chests.

The tea house is almost the only place of entertainment for the working classes. The owner therefore often engages comics, story- or fable tellers in order to attract a full house. Enjoying an evening at a Chinese restaurant will not break anyone's budget. A couple of cakes, a little jam, fruit, and a couple of cups of tea will at most set you back 10 cents; you are not hung over the next morning, and there is no trembling wife fearfully awaiting the tea drinker's homecoming.

*

*

*

Before we continue the voyage up the Yangtze Kiang, I will use the opportunity to introduce my readers to a gentleman, whom I have mentioned several times, His Excellency Chang Chih-tung, viceroy of Hunan and Hupei*. His is not a physically imposing presence, quite to the contrary. A little under average height, rather thin, and with stooping posture. But in this frail body lives a spirit that makes up for all external deficiencies; an intelligence such as few mortals possess.

Chang Chih-tung early made himself noticed by his exceptional talents. After having passed the several examinations for office, he rose quickly in rank and in his forties was appointed governor over the province Shensi.

When the Sino-French War over Tongking broke out, Chang Chih-tung was sent to Canton as viceroy. He immediately went to work with his usual energy to organize the province's meager means of resistance. European

* The area and population of both provinces is a little larger than France.

instructors were called on, and large amounts of modern firearms were purchased. When the French moved up against the viceroyalty's southern border in March 1885, Chang Chih-tung already had a substantial army in the field. The enemy was not only stopped, but suffered a significant defeat by the town of Lang Son. This was the first and last attack by the French in that direction. Nor did the French fleet dare go up the Canton River, since this was blocked by a strong mine-field organized by an American, Mr. Betts.

Though the viceroyalty thus was indirectly spared the horrors of war, the short campaign still cost several million dollars. The rich provinces could probably have absorbed this bloodletting, if the viceroy after the war had not begun experimenting on too high a scale with transplanting Western inventions to Chinese soil. Chang Chih-tung is among China's most enthusiastic advocates for progress, but since he often lacked the necessary means to carry out his ideas, the result has been that enormous sums of money have been wasted on projects that have not given any real benefits. The viceroy has also been very unfortunate in choosing his European advisors.

But enough about that; the provincial treasuries could not bear all the burdens that Chang Chih-tung's military and industrial plans imposed. He realized this himself and therefore petitioned Peking to be transferred. Remarkably enough, the emperor granted his request. The great Li Hung-chang's older brother, Li Han-chang, was sent to Canton, and in 1889 Li Chih-tung was appointed viceroy over China's richest provinces.

But what is most remarkable – he left his successor with a significant official debt. Such administrative dereliction has

always been severely punished. The responsible official is usually forced to make up the deficit with his own wealth, or he is dismissed. However, Chang Chih-tung just sent the financial statement to Peking and requested that the government pay Canton's official debt, and this was done.

Why?

Simply because this little gentleman enjoys a popularity that could easily become a danger for the Manchu dynasty. Next to Li Hung-chang, he is the most powerful living man in China. Especially among the broader sections of Chinese society, Chang Chih-tung has found strong support against the strict censors' efforts and the Peking government's displeasure. During his entire career in office he has had an eye for the little people in society and has carried on an unceasing fight with the corrupt system of bribery that in much too great an extent prevails in China.

Woe to the official who is guilty of extortion. No one can escape Chang Chih-tung's judgment – be he ever so high in rank. The higher up he is, the less sympathy he will get from the small, iron-hard viceroy.

In the Peking Gazette we will often see his well-written reports full of charges against faithless officials, and this fight for the people's interest he can conduct with good conscience, since even his bitterest enemy has not succeeded in casting the smallest blot on Chang Chih-tung's reputation. His incorruptibility and sense of justice has become a byword, and for these reasons the Peking government is obliged to overlook his poor financial management.



Chang Chih-tung

(This page intentionally left blank.)

It would not do any good to order the viceroy to cover the deficit in Canton's official accounts with his own fortune, since he does not have any. Despite the millions that have passed through his hands, the mighty Chang Chih-tung is as poor as a church mouse, and in China poverty is regarded as the greatest honor for a high-ranking official. He has never demanded any favors for himself, and it is with the power of this proud character that Chang Chih-tung has been able to carry out so many reforms despite all resistance from so many quarters.

The censors do not hide their dissatisfaction with this self-confident gentleman, quite the contrary. They have again and again seriously rebuked him. Thus, some time ago an official report was published in the Peking Gazette written by no less a personage than the head of the audit department. This document went through Chang Chih-tung's official conduct item by item.

It is not a short list of sins, and any other official would have been let go before he had reached half of the way.

It was not just about his financial dealings, but also about his treatment of his higher-ranking subordinates. According to the report, they had often had to wait several hours before he would give them an audience, etc. etc. The report caused so much of a sensation that the emperor was forced to order the viceroys of Canton and Nanking to investigate the matter, but these gentlemen, who perhaps may sometime come into the same situation, of course did not find anything to reproach in their powerful colleague.

Chang Chih-tung still received a missive from the government, which said that "though His Excellency up to

now has maintained his reputation for energy and zeal in the execution of his duties, the government would not omit to recommend that he take counsel with his subordinates more often to determine the best and most economical ways to execute his plans."

This reprimand has, of course, not been agreeable for Chang Chih-tung, but he can take it with equanimity, since the people are on his side.

After his appointment as viceroy to Hunan and Hupei, he has displayed a vigorous activism. His first act in office was to dismiss a large number of officers and enlisted personnel who had stood on the army rolls for years without having served. This step caused, as I have previously mentioned in the chapter about the secret societies, much bitterness among the pensioners, as most of these belonged to *Ko-lao-hui*. Both Chang Chih-tung and the viceroy of Nanking, who also undertook a purge of the military rolls, were hard hit, since the consequent mission riots cost the people many times more than the military pensions.

The introduction of the telegraph into Hunan province also caused considerable antagonism, since the contentious Hunanese do not view Western inventions with any greater love than they do the foreigners themselves. Materials and workmen were sent to the field, and they began to raise some telegraph poles and string some wire, but some gentlemen knew how to make use of the people's superstitions to excite them against the telegraph. The poles were pulled up, and the workers were happy to be permitted to flee without being molested.

Chang Chih-tung knew his people too well to use force until all other means had been tried. Shortly afterward he issued a proclamation, which was sent to every town in Hunan. Herein the viceroy regretted the recent events, but hoped that he would not have to use force to get his orders respected. The telegraph was an absolute necessity *in the event of war with the Europeans*,* and their ancestors' graves would surely suffer no harm from having the shadow of the telegraph wires falling over them. The ancestors would rather be joyous about every step that was taken to ensure the happiness of their descendants. The proclamation helped. A couple of months later the telegraph line was completed and Chang Chih-tung could keep himself *à jour* with the movements in Peking's diplomatic circles during the disturbances.

The railway issue has received much attention in later years by the Chinese proponents of progress, and after the leaders Li Huang-chang, Chang Chih-tung, and Liu Ming-chuan,[†] repeatedly have sent in the most insistent and compelling depictions of China's poor means of transportation in case of war, the construction of railways on a large scale is now finally going ahead. An imperial decree

* Chang Chih-tung hardly thought of a war with Japan at the time. The experiences of the last war will presumably give the railway issue a strong push forward.

[†] Liu Ming-chuan retired from his post as governor of Formosa in 1891. During his tenure, the island was connected to the mainland by a telegraph cable, coal mines were opened, and a couple of railroad lines were constructed. Now, since Formosa has been relinquished to Japan, Liu Ming-chuan's work will presumably be continued on a larger scale and in a more economical fashion – see more in "*Fra den kinesiske Mur ...*" ["From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain"].

was published in the Peking Gazette a couple of years ago. According to this, a large sum is to be collected in every province until the railway system is completed. The same decree also declares that foreign engineers and materials shall be employed to the least extent possible.

During his stay in Canton, Chang Chih-tung had especially advocated for a stem road from Peking to Canton. In a brilliant and authoritative report to the emperor he described in detail how this gigantic plan should be carried out. If the document was not so long, I would cite it here, since it gives a good example of the viceroy's comprehensive talents. This railway plan presumably has a lot to do with Chang Chih-tung's transfer to the Hunan and Hupei viceroyalty, since here he would have occasion to prove if he was the man to realize such a great project – or at least a part of it. There is an abundance of materials, coal, and iron here with which to construct the project.

Chang Chih-tung was not slow to get going. Several shiploads of machinery and rails were immediately ordered from Bochum in Westphalen, and a staff of engineers and geologists was hired. In 1893 the first little stub of railroad between Wuchang and Shih-hui Yao, which lies a couple of hundred kilometers below, was opened to traffic. The intention is to continue it to Kiukiang, and onward from there through Kiangsi to Canton. But it will probably be a long time before the railway gets that far, since Chang Chih-tung is firmly determined that in the future only Chinese engineers and materials will be employed. It will perhaps be a little more expensive, but the money will remain in the country and

several sidelines lead into rich iron- and coal mines that will now awaken Hunan to a new life.

The viceroy has caused several ironworks of the most modern design to be started up in Hanyang, and fabrication of iron rails has already begun.

During "*Ling-Fêng*'s" stay, I took a trip to Hanyang, and the tall smokestacks had just then been completed. They looked oddly out of place alongside the tall city walls, temples, and pagodas.

A large cotton mill also was under construction, since Chang Chih-tung is also attempting to drive Indian cotton fabrics out of his provinces.

According to the latest reports from China, the factory is now in full operation, but does not appear to offer any expectation of profitability, since the Indian labor force is as cheap as the Chinese. This result will hardly keep the energetic little viceroy from continuing to develop his country's industry. Let the millions roll, as long as China is reserved for the Chinese, seems to be his maxim to an even greater extent than Li Hung-chang's.

Chang Chih-tung is still in his prime years and will hopefully be able to carry out a number of the projects he has planned. He is no financial genius, but his countrymen will overlook a lot for the sake of his other great talents.

The powerful viceroy's influence is to a large extent aided by his magnificent pen, which he employs to further his aims, and we know how highly the Chinese value literary talents. Chang Chih-tung's works in bound and unbound forms have won more than usual distribution. Even his official reports are studied with eagerness.

But his literary fame is not the little gentleman's primary repute. In the eyes of his countrymen he has an even better defense against his enemies – poverty.

*

*

*

After a three days' stay in Hankow "*Ling-Fêng*" could again continue on its way up the Yangtze Kiang, guided by two Chinese pilots. A couple of hundred kilometers farther up, we came to the city of Yoh-chow, where the outflow from China's largest lake, Tung Ting, joins the river. Like Lake Poyang, this lake also form an overflow reservoir for surplus waters that come partly from Hunan's large rivers, Yuen, Su, and Siang, and partly from the Yangtze Kiang.

The lake is largest in the spring and can then reach all the way up to Hunan's capital Changsha and have a surface area of ca. 10,000 square kilometers. But navigation is even then very difficult and is only possible with flat-bottomed *junks*.

Above Tung Ting the current becomes stronger and stronger. We must constantly cross over from one bank to the other to avoid the worst of the eddies. Sometimes the ship comes so close to the bank that we could jump ashore, if we wanted to. It also happens that "*Ling-Fêng*" refuses to obey the rudder and buries its bow in the mud. But a couple of power pulses in reverse are enough to get clear again, and so it continues up to Sunday Island, where "*Ling-Fêng*" goes to anchor after a 5 days journey from Hankow.

Sunday Island is the despair of all steamships, since here the navigable channel makes the most unpredictable, capricious changes on the Yangtze Kiang. The island is only visible when the water level in the river is at its lowest. At other times it only forms a subsurface bank, which collects a part of the masses of sand that the strong current brings down from above.

These accumulations of sand constantly shift around as they respond to the varying flows; now to the right of Sunday Island, now to the left. The steamships therefore almost always must anchor here and send out a crew to explore the waters and find where the stream might be navigable before they can proceed.

Fortunately we had the steam sloop with us. It was lowered onto the water, and early in the morning the pilots and a couple of us officers set out to find a passage with 11 12 feet of water. Poles with red flags on top were set in the river bottom at suitable intervals, and by noontime "*Ling-Fêng*" could again slowly continue up through the narrow channel with the steam sloop leading the way. Everything went well, and we soon had Sunday Island behind us. The river channel was still so hazardous for a ship that drew as much water as "*Ling-Fêng*" that the Chief preferred to keep the steam sloop ahead and taking a sounding every now and then. This caution also proved to be fully justified, as time and again we were signaled to "Stop," since the ship otherwise would have run aground.

The next evening we went to anchor outside the city of Shasih. The current was then so strong that "*Ling-Fêng*" had hardly advanced more than 5 nautical miles per hour under

full steam. The steam sloop had also sagged behind and struggled to come up alongside.

Shasih lies on the left bank of the river, ca. 800 kilometers from Hankow. It is an important city with $\frac{1}{4}$ million inhabitants and a large trading volume. Together with Ichang, Shasih forms a station for all the *junks* that travel on the upper reaches of the Yangtze Kiang. The city stretches along the riverbank for about 10 kilometers, but it has only a couple of main arterial streets, which run parallel to the river.

A very solid stone masonry seawall has been constructed along the riverbank to guard against flooding. Without this structure both Shasih and the large city of Kingchow, which lies a couple of kilometers away, would be flushed away with the spring floods.

Early the next morning we move out again with the steam sloop in tow. Shortly after we have left Shasih, the terrain begins to change character. The low, mile-long plains give way to green-clad ridges on both sides, and these become more and more impressive as "*Ling-Fêng*" advances upstream.

We are nearing the high mountain chains that encircle the Hupei province. It is slow going against the current, so slow that sometimes the ship hardly moves, but then we cut across to the opposite bank and try the strength of the current there. This may help for ten minutes or so. Then another crossing, and so on as we fight our way upstream. Interesting, but eventually tiresome for the officer on the bridge.

I must say we were all happy when "*Ling-Fêng*" the next afternoon lowered anchor outside Ichang without having had any un-fortunate mishaps on its long voyage. We had been

under way more than a month from Hong Kong and had journeyed ca. 5,000 kilometers.

Chapter Ten

Shipping and trade

Prospects for steamship traffic on the Upper Yangtze – *Junks* vs. steamships – The hard life of the *junk* haulers – Norway's shipping in East Asia – General export association.

Ichang lies just about halfway up in Yangtze Kiang's navigable range, but is still the last port for the West's steam powered ships. All goods that are destined for the regions of the river's upper reach are brought to Ichang or Shasih, and then the *junks* carry them on further upstream.

Ichang was opened to trade in 1875, and shortly thereafter a steamship began running a scheduled route between this treaty port and Hankow, where most of the imported goods come from. Since the *junks* take ca. 40 days to navigate this stretch and steamships only 4 – 5, the first steamship was expected to make a very profitable business. But no; the Chinese merchants held back. Partly they had direct interests in *junk* shipping, and partly they considered the possibility that the steamship could not run in the winter when the river was at its lowest. In addition, a ring of *junk* owners was formed, and these threatened the merchants who might

consider using the steamship with refusing to transport their goods further upstream from Ichang.

The route therefore had to be closed down, but it was taken up again the following year. The newly organized China Merchants Company made the second attempt, and this time it succeeded. The company managed to keep the route going through the winter with the help of a flat-bottomed steamer, and "the Ring" little by little lost its power, since additional competitors sprang up alongside it.

However, before 1887 there was only this one single steamship, but then an English competitor arrived, and now there are 5 ships specially built for this traffic. The route still is not run as regularly as could be wished, since Sunday Island is, as mentioned earlier, unpredictable, and it often happened during our stay over the winter that 3 steamships would come up together, but this irregularity will presumably be rectified when more ships with even less draft join the competition.

We will now take a look at the river traffic above Ichang. Ca. 7,000 *junks* pass up and down annually. Most of them come directly from the new treaty port at Chunking, Szechuan's main commercial city.

Szechuan? The name will probably roll by most European ears without making the least impression. But it may well become better known in the future, especially to the business world, and I will therefore state that Szechuan is one of the world's richest, most fertile, and perhaps most densely populated regions. It is about the size of France, but with twice the number of inhabitants, so not so insignificant at all. Szechuan is called "China's garden," and there does not seem

to be a plant that does not thrive in the province's wonderful climate and fertile soils.

A Chinese proverb says, "You will never find a poorly dressed man in Szechuan," and the many missionaries who have made their way there confirm this assertion.

We can only hope that the poison of opium will not have too great an influence on these paradisiacal regions in the future, since the opium poppy is now cultivated on a very disquieting scale. Last year's harvest was ca. 6 million kilograms*. This was one-third of all of China's consumption and a lot more than the total imported from India.

The English parliament could without hesitation have adopted the anti-opium bill that Sir John Pease and his friends have proposed in the name of human charity, since if the Chinese cultivation of opium is to grow as rapidly elsewhere as has in Szechuan, it will not be long before the Indian state treasury must look for other sources of income anyway.

Perhaps the Chinese will be able to export opium before the end of the century? And if so, the poison should with justice be exported to England, which half a century ago forced it onto the Chinese nation with the cannons of Western civilization.

"There runs through all our life a *Nemesis*,
Which may delay, but never will relent,
and grants to none exception or release."

Not even the English.

* Half of this was exported to other provinces. A kilogram of opium costs ca. 30 *kroner*. The export value of this one article thus was ca. 90 million *kroner*.

Chungking lies by the tributary river Kialing, which comes from the north and brings with it the exports from half of Szechuan. The Min River, which joins the Yangtze Kiang a couple hundred kilometers above at Yibin, brings the other half, and the whole come together at Chungking, which thus becomes of enormous commercial significance.

The Chefoo Convention of 1875 opened a possibility for steamship traffic all the way up to Chungking, but unfortunately the convention was written in such a complicated and indefinite manner that the English and the Chinese could interpret it each in their own way. Li Hung-chang did not ostensibly yield until 1 January 1891.* A foreign customs station[†] was established in Chungking, but all interchange between the new treaty port and the outer world will as before be carried in Chinese *junks* – until a steamship under Chinese flag appears at Chungking.

To put a little balsam on the wound that the English envoy's diplomatic defeat had given his compatriots, China Merchants bought the riverboat "*Kuling*," that the speculator Mr. Little had built in anticipation of Chungking's opening.

The main reason for the Chinese resistance is said to be consideration for the thousands of *junks* that presumably will be put out of business when the steamships arrive.

According to statistics, ca. 1½ million people are employed in the *junk* traffic between Chungking and Ichang.

* Li Hung-chang has signed all treaties with the Western powers on China's behalf since 1870.

† All customs stations in the treaty ports, which are under the authority of the Imperial Inspector General, Sir Robert Hart, is considered "foreign" by the Chinese and apart from the general customs administration.

Thus it seems quite reasonable that the Chinese government hesitate to open the port to steamship traffic.*

On the other side the Europeans claim that the steamships will not harm the *junk* men at all and point to Hankow. When this port was opened, the Chinese also thought that the *junk* owners and crews would lose their livelihoods. But how did it go? Well, Hankow became the center of a greatly expanded trade, and the *junks* had difficulty managing the carrying trade on the tributary rivers. The number of *junks* is now greater than ever despite that $\frac{9}{10}$ of the traffic between Hankow and Shanghai is carried by steamships. It is not certain that the same would be the case with Chunking's opening to steamships, but in my opinion, and in that of many Chinese, it is worth a try, since the life that the poor *junk* men lead is inhumane. A brief insight into the circumstances of the lowliest and poorest paid workers may be of interest.

A *junk* of ca. 100 tons burden need a crew of more than 100 men to be hauled up the river at 3 – 4 knots. The three branches of a "rooster foot" at one end of the hauling cable are made fast to the mast at three points, so that the stress will be distributed more evenly. The cable is made from bamboo fibers and often is as thick as an arm. In its other end there is a series of loops. The haulers hook into these with the hooks on their pulling harnesses, and start pulling. Three fourths of the crew acts as "draft animals," one or two overseers drive them along with bamboo whips, and a score of men remain onboard to push the vessel free of cliffs and shoals with long poles. A half dozen have their hands full keeping the cable

* It is probable that the Japanese have demanded full opening of Chung-king by the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

clear of rocks and other obstacles that it may catch on. Then there is the swimming corps, which at the least signal jumps into the water as naked as Adam before the expulsion from Eden to cast the cable clear of rocks that stick up out of the water and cannot be reached from the bank. The whole operation is directed with a drum that stands near the steersman. Day in and day out in this life threatening and health breaking work, in sunshine and rain, while cursed at and lashed with the whip!

Several times I had good opportunities to watch these hair-raising scenes when the *junks* passed around a spit a little above Ichang.

The haulers braced their feet against stones and appeared to strain themselves to the utmost, but the drivers with the bamboo whips never seemed to be satisfied. They continually ran from one haul rope to the other to feel if it was taught enough, and their whips constantly fell on the backs of the tough skinned draft animals. I will never forget these scenes.

Now, one would think that the wretches would be well paid for patiently putting up with this slave life. But far from it – nine *kroner* is all they get for the trip up to Chungking, which on the average takes 4 – 5 weeks. Four *kroner* of this goes for the measly food, leaving 5 *kroner*. With this – my readers may perhaps think I am spinning tales – clothes are to be provided, their families supported, and a pipe of opium bought. With regard to supporting wives and children, this does not need to be much, since their wives generally are able to earn enough to feed themselves and the children. It does not take much. A bowl of rice and some vegetables – and a poor Chinese is content. The life of a *junk* hauler must be the

most miserable on earth. The wretches seldom live to become old. Not 10% live past 30 years of age.

Beside the concern for the *junk* traffic, there may be another and weightier reason for the government's hesitation to open the upper Yangtze to steamships. The European influence may grow and, of course, the Chinese do not wish for this to happen.

"China for the Chinese," is the red thread that has gone through Li Hung-chang's foreign policy, and this patriotic principle has been the basis for all his negotiations regarding the country's "opening." Where steamship traffic is concerned, he also has private interests to protect. The great Li is also a large business magnate, just like his rival Chang Chih-tung. Among other things, he is the major stockholder in China Merchants, and that may have not a little influence, since the company still does not own ships that are able to run up to Chungking against the strong current and the dangerous rapids.

Only ships with 4 – 5 feet draft and 16 – 17 knots speed can have a hope of making it. The aforementioned "*Kuling*" had these characteristics – only to some extent – as it later became apparent on the ship's route between Ichang and Hankow. But the company still bought it, since if "*Kuling*" was allowed to make an attempt, China Merchants' English competitors would soon follow.

When Chunking is opened for steamship traffic, the exports and imports will naturally increase to the same extent as the means of transportation are improved.

The shipping on the Yangtze Kiang is mainly carried by large companies. Among these, China Merchants, Butterfield

& Swire, and Jardine & Matheson are the most important. It is hardly probable that any Norwegian company could profitably participate in the competition, since the initial capital requirements are much too great.

But in any case we must first look to get more ships on China's extensive coastline, since here there are still lots of room, though it would have been better if we had come sooner.

When I arrived in China in early 1890, there were only a couple Norwegian ships on the coast, and I must confess that I was rather astonished that the world's fifth largest seafaring nation did not show more interest for East-Asian waters.

I thought that it might perhaps be awakened and immediately proceeded to gather information from all available sources about the shipping and the design of the ships, which I sent home to the newspapers and several ship owners.

It caught attention sooner than I had expected, and when during our stay in Ichang I perused the pages of *The Imperial Chinese Trade Reports* for 1891, I saw that the Norwegian shipping in one year had risen from 23,272 to 106,383 in- and out declared tonnage, without including the shipping to and from Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, and Korea, which had risen proportionally.

The repeated requests from the ship owners for more detailed information also indicate that more ships are coming. 1892 showed 139,255 tons and 1894 262,752.

OFFICIAL STATISTICS OF NORWEGIAN SHIPPING IN EAST-ASIA.

In- and out declared tonnage for 1886 – 94.

	1886	1888	1890	1892	1894
Chinese treaty ports	70,190	41,917	23,272	139,255	262,752
Japanese do.	—	70,414	20,204	58,881	100,000
Hong Kong	46,818	28,747	26,396	79,546	142,266
Singapore*	52,424	23,136	—	54,774	74,158

By comparing the table on page 83 with these reports, we see that there still is room – lots of room – if we only will make use of the opportunities. The ships sent out regrettably are far from as suitably designed as they should be, but that will probably be rectified when new ships are built. I will not bore anyone with a detailed description of ships suited for the coastal trade here.[†] I will only state that the main features are a draft not exceeding 15 feet, size between 1,000 and 1,500 tons deadweight, speed 8 to 10 knots, 2 iron decks and a light hurricane deck for the passenger traffic. Strong steam winches, large hatch openings, side ports, double bottom for water ballast, and machinery and boilers amidships.

The captains ought to be adept businessmen and well versed in the English language. They must be seriously admonished to act with consideration and courtesy to the Chinese. The contrary behavior has cost the English a lot of business. The officers ought to be paid the prevailing wages on the coast – otherwise the difference and more will be paid by the charterer. A captain's salary is from 150 to 200 Mexican dollars, 1st mate 90, 2nd 60, and 3^d 45.

* Not including ships stopping at Singapore for coal resupplies.

† Detailed and reliable information can be found in *kommerciel stipendiat* Arnold's report to the Interior Dept. in 1894.

If the ship is intended to sail on the China coast for an extended time, a Norwegian crew should only be hired for the voyage out and then sent home. Chinese sailors and firemen are both cheaper and better suited for the conditions. The best arrangement is to hire Chinese from the Asiatic Home in London.

*

The biggest impediment for Norwegians to gain entry to new seas and new markets is a less fortunate element of our national character. We are much too suspicious of the untried, the new.

It may have turned out bad for many a merchant, who blindly set out into unknown waters. His ship would then likely sail aground.

And that we will not risk, we Norwegians; we are slow, like a small creature crawling up a tar brush must be prodded along, and when we do reach the clear, well, then it too often is too late.

I once spoke with one of Norway's most capable general consuls, a man, who from the beginning of his career has done his utmost to further our international shipping and commerce. Among other things we came to discuss the sluggishness and self-righteousness that we Norwegians have in such high measure; something that is perhaps more easily seen from the viewpoints of others when traveling abroad.

The consul illustrated with a couple examples.

In his younger days he was stationed in Buenos Aires, some years before the great English-Argentine steamship

lines were established. He saw right away that there were opportunities for us and went to work. He was young and hopeful back then and thought that enterprising ship owners would explore the terrain themselves if they were only informed of the conditions – no apparent need for hurry with that.

Well, a steamship skipper from the West Coast finally ventured out on the ice. He got a full cargo of dry goods and Spanish emigrants and steamed off to the new El Dorado.

During the voyage a loud clamor arose among the passengers. Some of them came back toward the bridge in a threatening manner, gesticulated, and chattering loudly away in their Spanish tongue, which none of the ship's officers understood a word of. But the captain, who was wiser than his brethren, finally figured out that these wild Spaniards were bent on mutiny, capturing the vessel, and entering on the pirate trade as in former days. He was a resolute man; a couple of saluting cannons were loaded in view of the passengers and mounted pointed forward, and the officers were provided with pistols.

This graphic display of the captain's intent apparently spoke clearer than if he had had some knowledge of the Spanish language. The passengers grumbled, but drew back forward and stayed there quietly until the ship's arrival in Buenos Aires.

But there the Norwegians got to hear what the Spaniards thought of them. The Argentine newspapers were full of the passengers' complaints over the barbaric behavior and treatment they had suffered from the officers, and what was the worst, they had almost starved to death, since they had been

served something quite inedible, strange, quite indigestible – apparently good enough fare for the barbarians up there in the North, but not fit food for free Spaniards.

The captain came up to the consulate and complained about the villainous rabble he had taken onboard, and "he would never do that again!"

The consul told him what the newspapers said, and asked what food the passengers had got.

"So, these miserable Spaniards have complained about the food? Well, consul, they got the best barley porridge every day of the week."

"On Fridays too?"

"Oh, yes; I never spare on food on my ship!" replied the captain with the greatest self-assurance.

However, the consul permitted himself to remark that he did not find it so amazing that Spanish Catholics would be unhappy over being served *the best barley porridge every day*. Even Norwegian stomachs might need some lighter fare occasionally, and Catholics were used to eating fish on Fridays.

The captain could only shrug his shoulders at the consul being concerned over such trifles.

This first attempt thus was not very satisfactory. Here there was enterprise, paired with our Norwegian self-satisfaction and lack of knowledge. The consul wrote home and gave information about everything that experience had taught him was necessary. But it did not help.

Then the English came a couple of years later, and we lost a great opportunity that will not come back. Why? Because of our sluggishness.

The consul later came home for a visit. He once spoke with one of our largest brewers about sending some milder varieties of beer to Argentina, since Pilsner beer and such lighter kinds were the only ones popular in that climate.

"Oh no! There is no need for that," replied the Norwegian, "my beer is so excellent that it needs no improvement!"

"Oh, well," thought the consul, "maybe you know better than I; after all, you have become a rich man from your *so excellent beer*."

Later, when the competition had become tighter among the honorable brewers, the fiddle got another tune. The maker with the excellent beer thought maybe it would be well to follow the consul's advice. But by then it was too late, since the Germans had already shipped so many lighter kinds of beers to the overseas markets that the competition was stiff and the profits small.

Up to now, Norwegian merchants and ship owners have been mistrustful of our consuls' advice. No wonder that even the most energetic tire of preaching to deaf ears.

"Consuls are impractical office people," according to our wise men here at home, "you can't trust them."

I concede that some *are* impractical – but *not* the majority. I have visited a number of large ports on the five continents, and I have found many practical men in our consulates; men whose advice we can trust.

That industrial firm and ship owners have no opportunity to speak personally with the consuls is self-explanatory under the present conditions.

When a consul is appointed to a post, he usually sits there until he is old and grey and full of days instead of getting a half-year's leave every 3^d or 5th year so that he can go home and speak to exporters and ship owners. A change of air also creates energy, and that is what we need in this age of competition – not anything just so-so, that plods along in the same old office routine. Even if ship owners and merchants meet our consuls, even the best, with mistrust, that is not an excuse for letting these gentlemen's well-intended counsel go to waste. It *is* just possible that their recommendations might prove valuable.

I often asked importers out there in China why they never got so large a quantity of, f. ex., marinated herring, anchovies canned in oil, Dahl's sterilized milk, etc., etc., that the customers, who had developed a taste for such products, could be supplied throughout the year.

"Well, the Norwegian exporters usually demand that we pay cash up front for their goods, and that we cannot go along with. We have competitors, and when they can get their goods on more favorable terms, we must be careful, and we, who are involved in so much business, do not have a lot of cash money on hand. Besides, if the Norwegian exporters do give us credit, they screw up the price so high to insure themselves that our profit becomes too small if we are to sell the goods at a reasonable price."

But China is not an uncivilized country. The business conditions there are not any more uncertain than they are in Spain or France, and it is not common to demand cash on the barrelhead before goods are shipped to those countries,

though the transactions are conducted in the same manner as in China or at least more or less the same.

A firm in the Chinese treaty ports, English, German, or French, all, of whatever nationality – except the Norwegians – uses the following procedure:

The firm first sends a proposal to the exporters that reads about as follows:

"Send us a sample shipment. This we will sell to the manufacturer's best advantage. The only commission we will take is to retain necessary samples. These will enable us to get orders from the Chinese merchants, and we will, of course, be responsible for such orders."

The samples come out – not with the country of origin's labels, like we usually do, but with labels in English or Chinese. The agent takes up orders, and these are sent home, not accompanied by a letter of credit on Hamburg or London for the approximate amount of goods and freighting as our exporters wish. No, the European firms know very well that they do not keep cash on hand in China more than in other places, and they secure themselves in the following manner:

The goods are sent to the export agency. The manufacturer takes the bill of lading to his bank and asks if it will discount a 3 months open draft drawn on Shanghai, for example.

"We will try," says the head cashier, and contacts the Hamburg or London branch of the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank to inquire if the Chinese firm is solid and if the bank will assume the draft against the bill of lading.

If everything is in order, the draft is discounted, and the manufacturer is paid for the goods less the 6 or 7 percent that

the banks take for discounting and collection. The manufacturer must, of course, include this expense when he calculates the sale price.

The bill of lading is now sent with the goods to the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank in Shanghai, and the agent in Shanghai receives a duplicate. The goods go directly to the bank's warehouse on arrival.

Here they lie well protected until the agent needs them. He then goes to the bank with the bill of lading and request to be delivered a part or all of the shipment. Then it depends on whether the agent has credit with the bank, and if so, how much. F. ex., the value of the shipment may be 10,000 *kroner*, but the firm's credit only 5,000.

"Very well," says the bank cashier, "You can have 5,000 worth of the goods. The rest will remain in our warehouse until you have sold what you got or otherwise can obtain money to pay us for the remainder."

The costs of further discounting the draft, if the recipient leaves the goods in storage more than three months, must of course, be paid by the recipient. The sender has no further responsibility for the goods, once the bank in Hamburg or London has discounted the draft.

The risk thus is not appreciably greater than if he had received direct payment on delivery.

Of course, he will suffer a loss if the recipient goes bankrupt, or if he refuses to receive the shipment, since the bank then must sell the goods at auction, and the sender must pay the difference between what is owed and what is realized at the auction.

But usually the banks' branch offices in Hamburg and London are well informed about the status of the merchants at home, and they will hardly discount the drafts if there are any doubts about the solidity of the firms.

I think that an association of the exporting firms would help lift Norway's exports to Asia as well as to other parts of the world. This can be seen from the experience in Sweden before and after formation of *Almanna Exportforeningen*.

In 1880 the value of goods exported from Sweden amounted to 220 million *kronor* and only rose to 228 million over the next 6 years. But then the export association was established in 1887, and in 1894 the exports had risen to nearly 320 million *kronor*. These numbers speak for themselves.

Several of the larger exporters I have spoken with feel that an export association will *not* be advantageous for them; quite the contrary. They think like this: "If my agent discovers a new market, he will report this to the association, and all my competitors who are members will thus also be my competitors in this new market. It is better to have private agents, so that I can keep the market for myself."

There may be a lot of truth in this sentiment, but it is the old parochial local political view that must eventually fade away, even in Norway.

Many of the Swedish exporters probably had similar sentiments, but they have later seen the advantages of the export union's activities. All unions have their drawbacks, but when the advantages are larger, they are worth the price of membership. An export market that does not have room for several competitors is of little value. And why should the

Norwegian agents only be able to discover such worthless markets, when the Swedes have found markets that are big enough for them all?

Much can always be found to say, pro or contra, about any matter. I in no way flatter myself that my opinion is the only correct one. Of course merchants know their own affairs better than a lay person, but it often happens that an outsider can have a clearer view than one who is in the middle of the struggle.

And now I will end this chapter with a wish for a more dynamic presence of the Norwegian flag and Norwegian export articles in East-Asia.

Chapter Eleven

In the center of China

The attack on the Europeans in Ichang – The *Taotai* of Shasih's visit onboard "*Ling-Fêng*" – An excursion to "The Pillar of Heaven" – More disturbances – *Ko-lao-hui*'s last convulsion – Revolt in Mongolia – Peace on Earth.

Ichang is the only treaty port where the Europeans have not been allotted a certain tract of land to build on, but then this is not really needed here, since there are no other colonials than the customs personnel, the English consul, and the missionaries.

An old temple outside the city walls served as customs office and residence for the director. The harbor master and a couple of clerks had also got spacious lodging there, while the other customs agents had to be content with the accommodations available on houseboats lying at anchor. The missionaries, on the other hand, had built themselves elegant brick homes near the customs office. The American station had just been opened – and then everything was turned to rubble on the 2nd of September.

It was not a comfortable sight to see these blackened ruins sticking up at our arrival in Ichang. We, of course, went

ashore right away to view the devastation and hear details of the unexpected onslaught, which had come so close to start a bloody conflict between China and the Western powers.

The attack had been planned to the last details and was mainly carried out by people from the districts above Ichang, where *Ko-lao-hui* had conducted a violent agitation against the missionaries, especially the Catholic mission, which had established a children's shelter in Ichang.

The day before the attack, a child was brought to this sanctuary and was turned over to the sisters' custody after the necessary papers had been processed.

The child was said to be a girl, since only girls were allowed, but, when it was undressed, it proved to be a boy, and this struck the sisters as suspicious. However, they thought it best to keep the child for the time being.

But the next day, several well-dressed individuals appeared at the convent's entrance gate accompanied by a throng of unfamiliar women and men who cursed the sisters out as child thieves.

"Yesterday evening they stole a small boy, though they have said they only accept girls!" yelled someone in the crowd.

The boy was, of course, given back at once, since the objective of this comedy seemed apparent, and a message was also sent to the magistrate with an explanation of what had happened.

The mob also moved on to the city hall with the leaders in front and much noise and commotion. The frightened magistrate had the doors opened wide so that they could enter and present their complaint against the missionaries. But the

mob did not allow him to speak; they only clamored for justice for the child thieves, and the magistrate was forced to accompany them back to the convent along with the military commandant and a company of soldiers.

But it was not the leaders' intent to instigate any investigation into the matter. According to their later testimony, they only wanted "that the city's civil and military authorities should be present during the subsequent misdeeds, so that the Europeans could see how powerless the authorities were under the Manchu government."

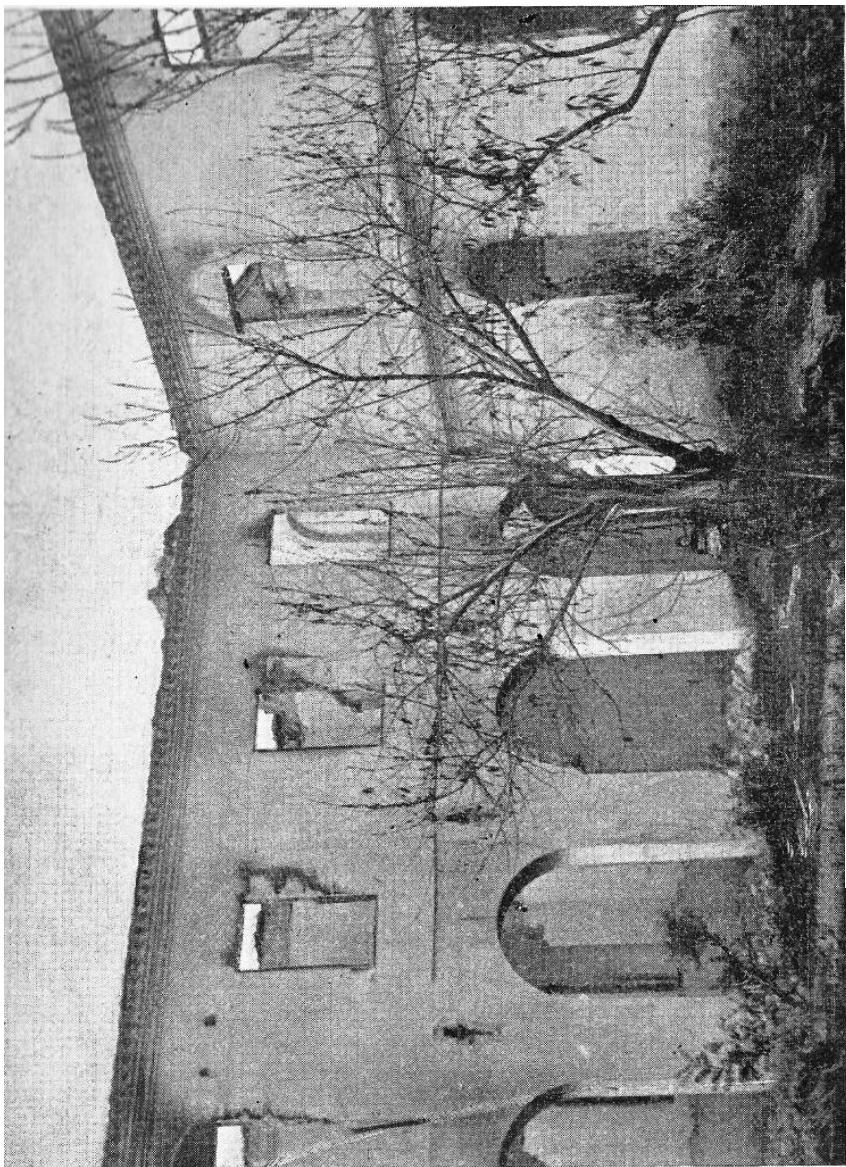
The magistrate had hardly arrived at the convent before the head organizer stepped up on a rock and cried: "Follow me brothers! Kill the foreigners! I will die for you!"

This was the signal for attack. The rabble lit torches, blew on trumpets, and then ran to the American mission, broke through the gate, and everything at once went up in a sea of flames, thanks to the cans of kerosene which they carried with them. The missionary Sowerby tried to get away. Someone in the mob tried to kill him by slashing at his head with a spade, but he evaded this with a sideways leap. With the courage of desperation, he then rushed through the crowd and luckily managed to escape down to the riverbank without further encounters.

The steamship "*Paohuo*" fortunately lay in the harbor, and the Europeans sought refuge there as their homes in turn was burned down. The magistrate and the commandant did not dare make a move, since the soldiers were Hunanese. They did not even try to remonstrate with the mob.

House after house was set on fire and finally the convent, a substantial building with two large dragons out front. The

The inner convent garden after the fire.



(This page intentionally left blank.)

sisters managed to slip out through a backdoor, and escorted by Father Braun, a former German officer, they made their way down to the riverbank. The soldiers also helped them, but the poor women still were a pathetic sight when they came onboard the "*Paohuo*."

All the small orphans clung to the sisters during the flight and had to be held back by force. They were turned over to the magistrate's custody. Father Braun got a nasty cut on his head in the rush besides numerous scratches and tears over his whole body. One of the sisters also was physically abused to the extent that she had to be taken to a hospital on arrival in Shanghai.

After the convent had been set on fire, the mob rolled like an avalanche down the streets and set fire to the remaining mission buildings. The English consulate was spared, since the riot's instigators were under the impression that if they just left the European officials in peace, their punishment would not be so severe. Jardine & Matheson's large storage facilities also escaped destruction because the firm's Chinese agents fell on their knees before the head rioter and swore that they at the time only contained goods belonging to the natives, so that the people themselves would lose if the storehouses were burned.

Faithful to their traditions, the customs service personnel stood guard armed to the teeth under the command of the director, Count d'Arnaux.

The rabble stormed up to the entrance of the former temple, but at the sight of the Martini-Henry rifles and Colt revolvers the first in front became a little apprehensive and

asked some soldiers if they thought the Europeans would shoot?

The reason for the mob's audacity, despite the presence of the military, was that they knew that the officers were not allowed to give the command to fire, except in self-defense.

When the soldiers assured them that there indeed would be a bloody response if they tried to attack the customs service, the whole pack turned about and disappeared from the scene. Not one of the rioters was arrested. Hardly due lack of will on the part of the magistrate, but from lack of means. The people's threatening attitude kept him from taking action in the matter.

*

*

*

After the arrival of "*Ling-Fêng*" everything was soon back in its old tracks again. Most of the missionaries returned and began to make themselves as comfortable as possible on the houseboats or in the houses that the magistrate put at their disposal.

The viceroy's representative, the *taotai* of Shasih,* came for several visits in October in order to settle the indemnity claims. Naturally, there was much ceremony on each occasion. Several companies of soldiers usually stood lined up along the riverbank with their red banners, and in the harbor highly decorated war *junks* festooned with dragon pennants and colorful flags lay ready to go alongside when

* The province of Hupei is divided into 4 counties or *taotai* districts. One of these is Shasih with ca. 6 million inhabitants. Ichang is the county's second largest city and the only place in Hupei that experienced disturbances. All the others occurred in the Nanking viceroyalty.

the steamship with His Excellency onboard dropped anchor. The saluting usually began a quarter hour before his arrival and ended a quarter hour afterward. The Chinese apparently feel that a terrible noise and lots of smoke is necessary for honoring such high personages.

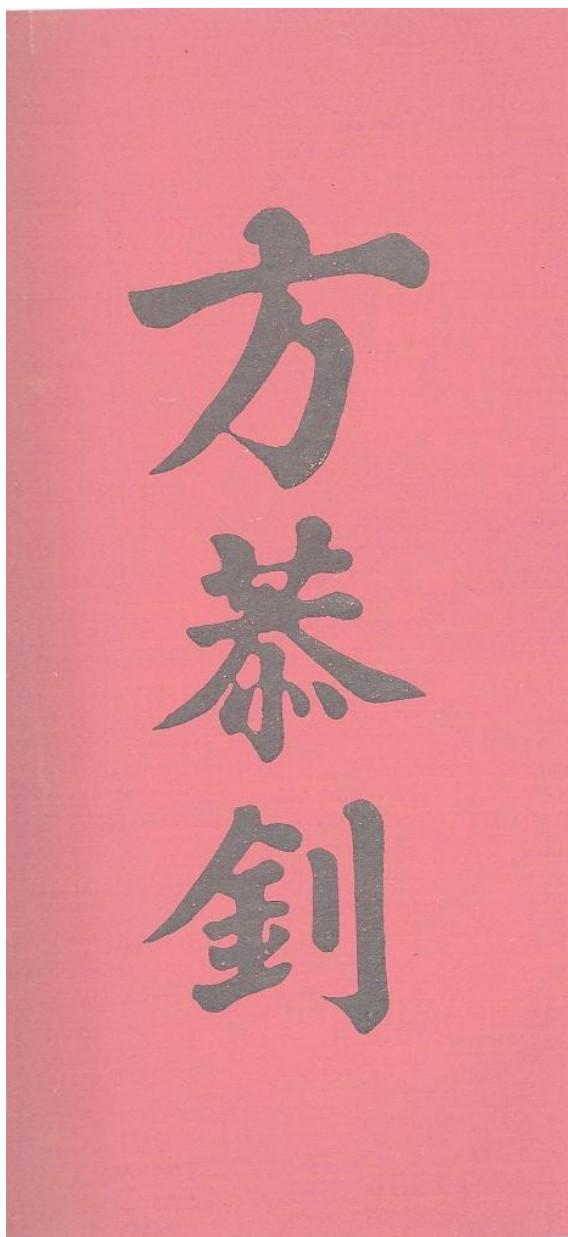
The commandant in Ichang also had more than usual reason to put on a show for the *taotai*, since his behavior during the attack had won anything but approval from the viceroy, the energetic Chang Chih-tung. The general probably had something of a notion that dismissal in disgrace would not be undeserved for the weakness he had shown during the uprising.

One day we were advised that the *taotai* would pay us a visit onboard "*Ling-Fêng*." We naturally felt very flattered and immediately made arrangements for receiving His Excellency with all the ceremony his high rank required. The ship was bedecked with flags from bowsprit to taffrail, and the crew dressed in parade uniforms.

When everything was ready, the *taotai*'s adjutant came onboard with His Excellency's calling card. The Chinese use red paper and the size depend on the owner's rank.*

A few minutes later a magnificently decorated *junk* comes alongside. Cannon thunder on shore and on board, the ship's guard under my command present arms, and a tall, powerfully built gentleman, dressed in his elegant robes of office with a bright red button on his hat, strides across the deck. His bearing is majestic, his whole appearance both gracious and impressive; in short – His Excellency Fang Kung-chaò

* The attached red paper strip is an exact reproduction of *Taotai* Fang Kung-chaò's calling card.



Taotai Fang's calling card.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

is a magnificent example of "the poor yellow heathen" that we hear so much about in Europe.

The captain, bowing and smiling, leads him into the captain's cabin, where tea, preserved fruits, and champagne are served.

According to the Chinese democratic customs even the most humble servant is permitted to be present, and one may readily understand that the captain felt a little ill at ease, when he with the assistance of the interpreter was to attempt to entertain his eminent guest while a score minions of the *taotai*'s entourage stared at him as if he was an exotic animal.

It is not easy to speak the first time you are to converse with a Chinese mandarin. You are trying to act gracious and civil, but the words stick in your throat. You stammer and feel awkward in the presence of these gentlemen, who seem as polished as the courtiers who once graced the salons of St. Germain. You cannot help but look at him with wonder and curiosity. There is always something to study about your Chinese guest; something you have come a long way to see. His dress, manners, and whole aspect divert and puzzle you.

At a distance, at home in Europe, you imagined yourself to be quite superior to these "yellow heathen," but now you realize your error. To the mandarin's eyes you are equally curious, but the polished diplomat does not let it show at all, though he looks down on you with millennia of inherited pride.

Perhaps the eminent gentleman thinks you are a barbarian, even though you imagine yourself to present a rather elegant appearance. You belong to a lower class of the world's population. You represent a race that possesses

strength and raw energy, powerful fleets and armies. But this disciple of the great Confucius has no respect for such, though the circumstances force him to take account of this brutal force. All of China's sages have disdained the military profession. The martial arts have the least value, and the large nations in the West, whose power relies on their military armaments, are just "poor heathens," though they go in the name of Christ, the name of Him, who these "people from across the ocean" proclaim preached peace and love for one's neighbor. They must either be great hypocrites or straight out confidence tricksters, since he has never seen these "barbarians" behave otherwise than the exact opposite.

You do not feel so superior, when you know he views you in this light.

Then your tongue finally comes loose and you try to impress him by telling him about all the great inventions made in the West in the last centuries. Your distinguished guest has perhaps seen all these, or has never heard of them – either way, he politely thanks you as if you had just given him some costly presents in the most polished phrases.

Nothing can surpass the mandarin's civility. Elegant poetical phrases flow seamlessly from his mouth. He wishes you good fortune both down here and up beyond; he wishes that every breath of wind will blow blessings to your arms, etc., etc.

Then a glass of champagne is drunk. This is the signal to leave. The guard present arms, the cannons thunder, and the *taotai* of Shasih takes his leave of the captain with the most sincere and courteous professions of friendship.

Except for some inspection duties, "disembarkation," etc. and some "General Quarters" exercises, we officers had almost the whole day for ourselves. The English consul and the customs director gave us advice for disposing of the surplus free time. Tours to temples and pagodas – and, above all, when the strong current abated, take the steam sloop up to The Pillar of Heaven, a unique rock formation ca. 50 kilometers upriver from Ichang.

A couple of landlubbers, the executive officer, and I accordingly agreed to make the excursion on a Sunday in early November.

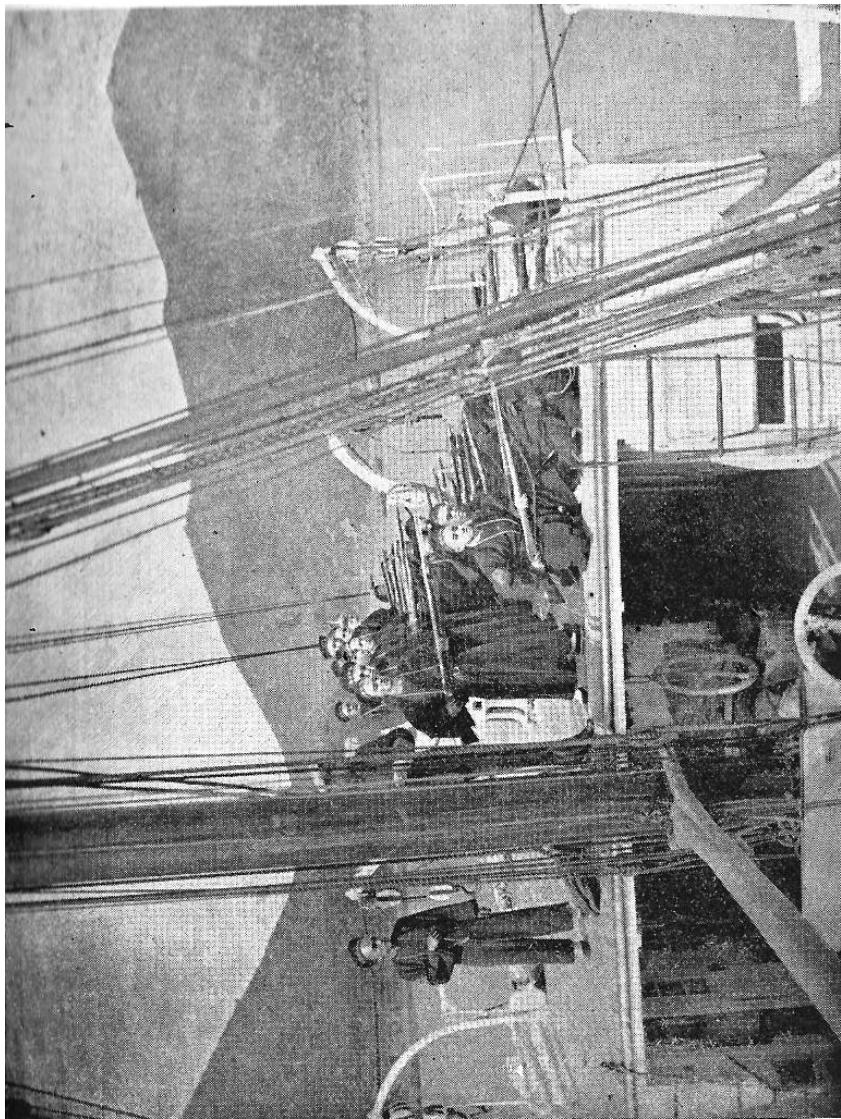
A steamboat had never before been seen above Ichang. Nor would we have been allowed to use a so convenient means of transportation if the beautiful, yellow dragon flag had not fluttered from the stern flagstaff on our elegant steam sloop.

The river was now about at its lowest stage – a couple of hundred meters out from our anchorage a month ago, we could now walk with dry feet – a splendid boulevard that was regularly made use of by the European residents.

We got off early in the morning. Sunshine and a refreshing breeze made the last remnants of the effects of a "better" dinner the previous day disappear as dew for the sun.

After steaming along for a quarter hour or so, Yangtze looks like a small lake with no sign of a river flowing into it. People with little knowledge of geography could easily believe that they had now reached the source of the mighty river.

But suddenly a cleft becomes visible in the mountain chain to the left and, hello! – here is the Yangtze again,



"Ling-Fêng"

The rifle division "Clear for action!"

(This page intentionally left blank.)

narrowed down to a width of 3 – 400 meters. The river flows majestically through this opening in the steep limestone cliffs.

For a short distance there seems to hardly be room for a hundredth part of the enormous volume of water that rolls out into the ocean at Shanghai.

The surprise strikes one with indescribable force. It is difficult to portray the wonderful natural panorama that unrolls before our eyes during the next hour's cruise. Not the smallest breath of air disturbs the water surface. No one would believe the current runs at 4 knots, except when we turn our eyes to the shoreline, where the least obstacle creates a whirl of white foam. Only now and then the beautiful harmony of nature is broken by the hue and cry of the poor wretches, who with unspeakable toil pull the clumsy *junks* upstream. Clouds shroud the tallest mountain peaks and reinforce the beguiling, stately impression.

The yellowish limestone cliffs form the most peculiar figures. One of them resembles a cat. That is why the Chinese have called this part of the river *Huang Mao Hsia*, "The Yellow Cat River."

Small waterfalls run down to the river through narrow side valleys, whose walls are as perpendicular as fortress battlements. The vegetation is rich, wherever there is a spot to take root in.

The launch steams slowly up the river's zigzag winding course. Downstream headed *junks* round the bends ahead and come to meet us. When we are in the lower end of the bend and they in the upper, the vessels look like small boats, but then they become larger and larger, and when we pass them, we see that they are up to 50 meter long *junks*, full-loaded

with goods from Chungking. The majestic scenery makes the colossi look like dwarves.

Farther up the river again makes a right angle turn and the landscape becomes wilder and wilder. On the right hand dizzying vertical mountain walls like cliff fortresses and castles from the Middle Ages. However, on the left hand the wildness lessens as the launch forges on, and in a valley by the foot of some green-clad ridges picturesque villages smilingly welcome us.

Another 15 minutes, and we have reached our goal. On one side a limestone mountain rises up against the clear sky, out of rock falls and forests, and over on the other riverbank stands an isolated, green-clad rock formation – it is The Pillar of Heaven.

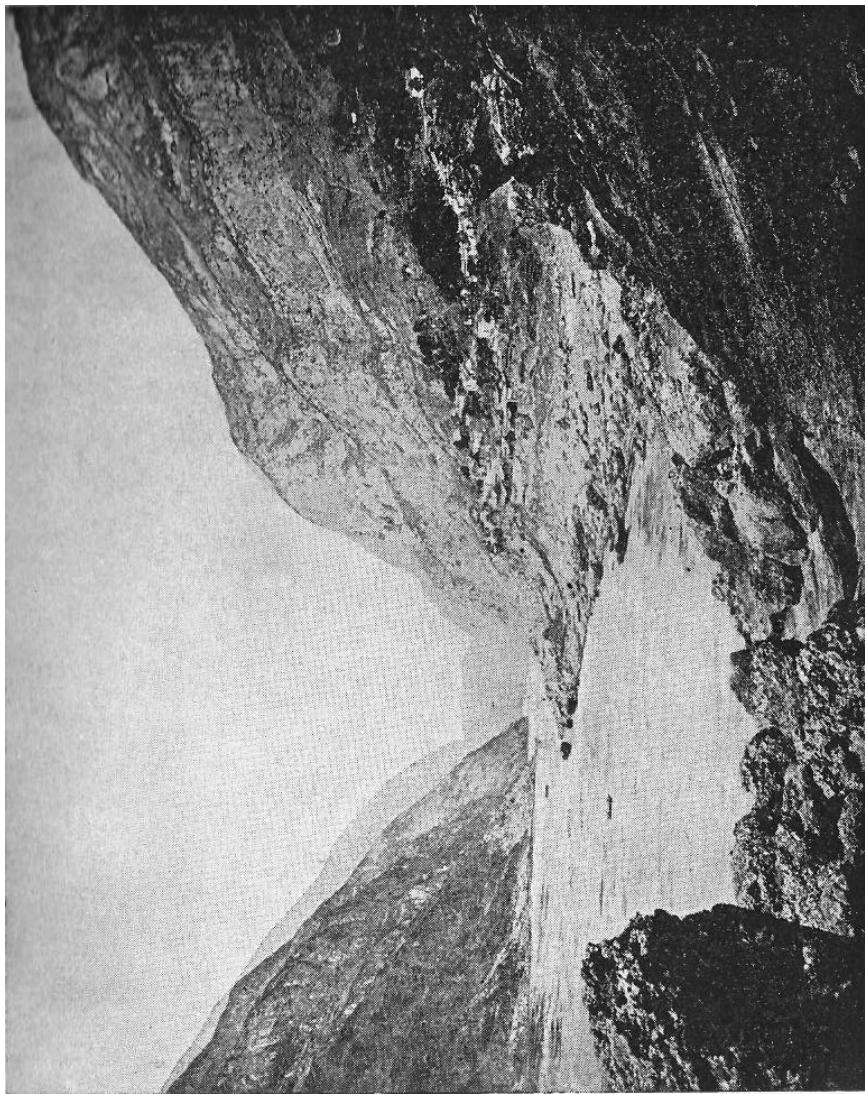
The portrayal the Europeans in Ichang had given us earlier certainly was not exaggerated. Both wonderful and impressive! We feel quite intoxicated. The machinist instinctively stops the launch, and several minutes pass before we can tear ourselves loose from this beautiful nature setting.

Since it is only 12 o'clock, we continue on our way up to the first "rapids," which according to many people's opinion will make further navigation by steamships impossible.

Here we were disappointed, or rather pleasantly surprised. The "rapids" were hardly noticeable, only some small islets and rock heads stuck up out of the river, but the clear channel appeared wide enough for even large ships.

However, I imagine that in the summertime it may well be impossible for even the strongest engines to defy a current that runs to 8 – 9 knots. The water then runs over both islets and rocks. It is running against these that cause the "rapids."

View of the Upper Yangtze



(This page intentionally left blank.)

But enough about this. We easily went a half score kilometers farther up and landed near a beautiful Buddhist temple. In the abbot's guest quarters, we enjoyed a good lunch, which our servants had brought along, and then about 3 o'clock we turned back down the river again, well satisfied with the use we had made of the Sabbath.

*

*

*

However, it looked like we would get something other to keep us busy during the winter than to amuse ourselves. Just as everything seemed to have settled down again after the storm filled summer, ominous rumors began flying all over China. The government had got wind of that *Ko-hao-lui* again intended to produce a major revolutionary drama. Everything was planned for causing a general uprising against the Manchurians. Proclamations were printed and weapons smuggled in. Only the signal from the leaders was lacking, and apparently there were a lot of people who was waiting for the 16th of November - but the signal did not come, since on that day more than a hundred of the sworn conspirators were under lock and key.

The captain on "*Ling-Fêng*" received orders a couple of days before to be ready, since the revolt was intended to start down by Shasih, and it would then be well to have a vessel down there to take the authorities on board. But now we remained peacefully at anchor in Ichang, thanks to the government's energetic action and the Chinese officials' loyalty.

At the same time that this conspiracy was discovered there were also other unwelcome news. Beyond the Great Wall lies a part of the Chihli province, which for a long time has been used for grazing by the Mongolian nomads. The relationship between these livestock herders and the immigrant Chinese farmers is fraught, similar to that between the Indians and the whites in America, and since the Chinese colonists largely consist of criminals who are exiled to these regions, one can imagine that the Mongols have been subject to numerous injurious wrongs in the passage of time. But they seem to generally have been very accommodating and have allowed the Chinese a part of their territory in return for an annual tribute.

A chief of eleven Mongol tribes lives in the city of Peitse. In the 1880s this gentleman had leased several tracts of land to a Chinese by the name of Yang Yu-chuen, who was the leader of a secret political society. These two gentlemen had somehow fallen out with each other, and on the 10th of November the telegraph reported that Yang had moved against Peitse with a large crowd of his followers and attacked the Mongols. Yang knew that this breach of the peace would not go unpunished, and in his despair he resolved to revolt against the government and in this way perhaps save his life.

He declared the Manchu dynasty deposed in a bombastic proclamation and moved south with 300 men, which soon swelled up to 10,000. Several unfortified cities surrendered without resistance, among them Sanshi-kiatse, where there were several families who were followers of the Christian religion. But since these "Christians" on several occasions

had committed a number of transgressions against their neighbors while they relied on the foreign consuls for protection, the heathen part of the population joined with the rebels and killed a couple of hundred of their enemies.

The city of Pin-chuan was taken on the 19th of November, but that was as far as the uprising got. Li Hung-chang sent several elite army regiments from Tientsin with the railroad to Kaiping, which then marched north, and Manchurian cavalry came from Mukden. Surrounded on all sides, the insurgents were obliged to stand and fight. The whole swarm was split up and Yang himself taken prisoner with his primary adherents.

In December their heads fell for the executioner's axe in Tientsin, and by Christmas the government could confidently declare peace over the whole realm. Peace abroad and at home.

In Europe this event [the Jindandao Incident] had assumed gigantic dimensions, mostly due to the sensationalized accounts that Reuter's correspondent had telegraphed around the world. According to him, the whole Chinese empire had been on the brink of disaster.

But to talk of revolution, when there is a commotion outside the Great Wall – in *Kow wa* – is as sensible as to talk of revolt in France when the Kabyle go on a rampage in Algeria, or the deportees in the land of cayenne pepper, French Guiana, mutiny.

Chapter Twelve

New Year's Day

New Year's Day is the largest annual event in China's social and political life. Even the emperor's birthday pales in comparison to this important day, when the world's most industrious people fold their arms and rest – some individuals perhaps for the first time in the course of the year, since the Chinese observe fewer holy days than any other nation.

Since time immemorial their astronomers have calculated the year as twelve moon-months with a leap-month at certain intervals. But at the same time the civil year is regulated by the sun, and New Year's Day falls on the day of the first new moon after the sun has come into the sign of Aquarius. The time thus varies between January 21 and February 19, but whenever New Year's Day arrives, it is the signal for general celebration. All public business ceases 10 – 12 days before. Government offices are closed, and the officials' seals are wrapped up and surrendered to the top mandarin's wife's care – a custom that hardly indicates a lack of respect for women.

The official New Year's celebration lasts a whole month during which no criminal must be punished. Nor, for the abovementioned reason, can the officials set their stamps on

any documents, but the inconveniences that might otherwise result as a consequence of this custom are usually avoided in a nifty way by stamping several blank sheets beforehand, and if something happens, a dispatch can be sent immediately — without breaking the letter of the law.

However, the brake that the New Year's holiday sets on the government's machinery can cause awkward situations. We have an excellent example of this from the war with Japan.

It is said that the emperor gave orders before New Year's to the governor of Shantung to send some troops to Manchuria. But then the Japanese attacked the naval station at Wei-hai-wei, and the commandant telegraphed the governor and requested help. A telegram was sent to the emperor, requesting that the troops sent to Manchuria be reassigned to reinforce the garrison at Wei-hai-wei.

The telegram arrived in Peking on the 2nd day of the new year, but the conservative officials of the court were so set in their ways that they did not find it proper to disturb the emperor in the first week of the new year, and the result was — that Wei-hai-wei fell to the enemy.

I cannot guarantee the truth of this tale of untimely concern for the emperor's New Year's repose, but so it is said.

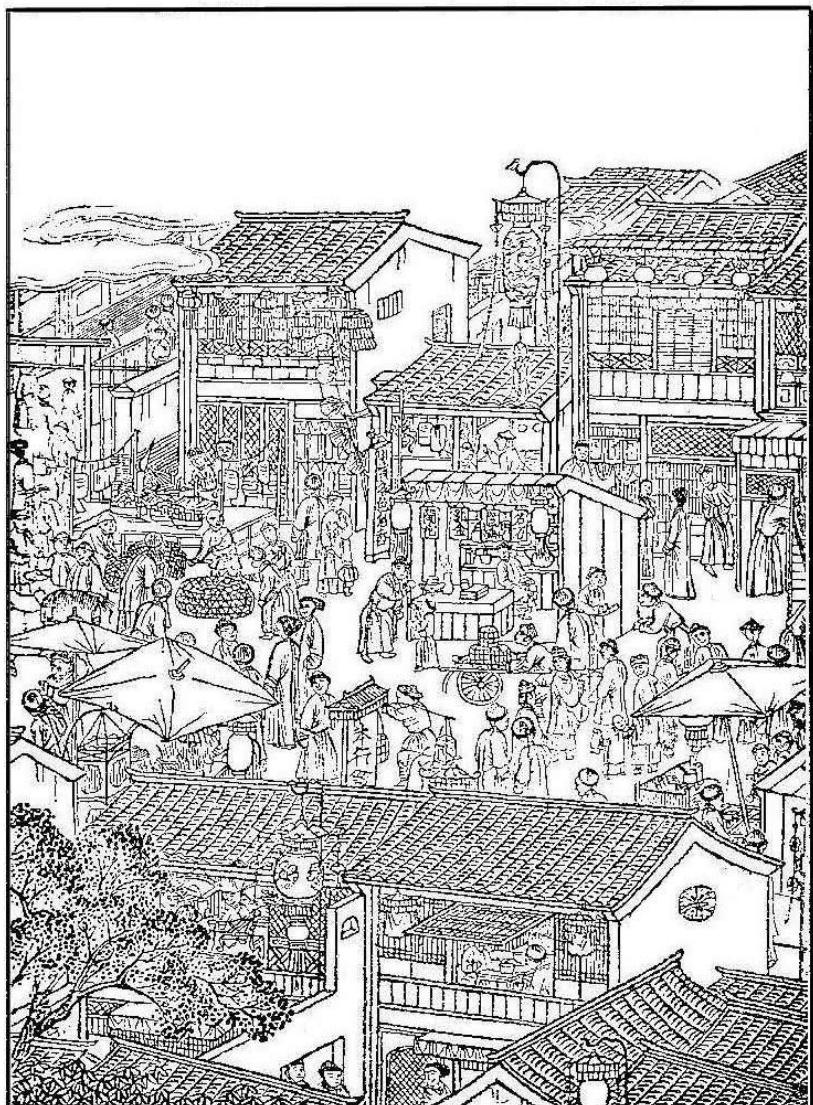
When New Year's approaches, everything and everybody undergo a remarkable change, and in at least *one* respect this may work for the benefit of the European colonials' olfactory organs.

It is common to assert that civilization and the consumption of soap are closely related.

If this yardstick is to be used, one would come to remarkable results in East-Asia. The Japanese would be as superior to the Europeans as these to the Chinese. The Japanese is the world's cleanest nation, while their neighbors are about the opposite – something they apparently have a sense of, since at New Year's they try to make up for what has been neglected. More water may be used in the last week of the year than in all the others combined. A whole year's accumulation of cholera bacteria, etc. is to be flushed away, and the streets are literally flooded with dirty water. The whole nation seems to be inspired by a fanatic desire for cleanliness – but unfortunately only this once.

There is a bustling activity inside the houses. So many things are to be done to get ready for the holiday. The female members of the families are especially busy with baking cakes, for the Chinese are very fond of all kinds of confectioneries. But of these there are few that agreeable to our tastes. I will only describe "*Nien-kaon*," the New Year's cake *par excellence*. It mainly consists of rice flour, water, and sugar. The ingredients are kneaded together into firm dough and formed into diverse shapes without a trace of yeast or other means of leavening. Then these indigestible products are decorated with colorful figures and set aside to – dry, since they think baking will reduce the quality. When the cake is to be eaten, it must first be dunked in warm sugar water or wine.

Of course there are many other varieties that look more appetizing in the shops for us Europeans, but it is generally best to stay three feet away from Chinese confections – at least unless you have an ostrich's stomach.



New Year's week.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

Before the old year goes outto rest, all Chinese try to square their accounts with gods and humans. Those who feel themselves troubled by a sinful burden – but that is not many – or those that are apprehensive that Heaven will punish them with some misfortune or other, try to assuage the wrath of the spirits *en bloc* at the end of the year.

Then the despised priests again come to honor and esteem, since now they are hired to pray for forgiveness of sins and to assist with offering ceremonies. These begin on the 23^d day of the last month in the year. Every family then gathers around the hearth to thank the patron saint of the house for all the blessings he has brought the family through the year. The "kitchen god," as this unseen entity is also called, play about the same role in the popular superstition as our "*Julenis*" with us.

The spirit is usually depicted on paper similarly to God, the Father in our old catechism, or it is represented by a more or less artistically carved and painted wooden statue, all according to the family's financial means.

The patron saint is on vacation in the New Year's week, and the people believe that he uses this breathing spell for a trip to Heaven to acquaint *Shang-ti** with the family's life and strife in the past year.

Of course it is opportune to bribe the spirit with offerings of goodies such as oranges, cookies, etc., just like we treat *nissen* with Christmas porridge, since there may be a lot of this and that that the strict judge up there in Heaven will not be pleased to hear about.

* *Shang-ti* means the same as Jehovah.

But it would be best of all if the spirit did not get any opportunity to tattle tales out of school, and some really naïve souls think they can prevent this in a very practical way. Pretending to offer, they stick gooey cake dough in the mouth of the patron saint's simulacrum — and so he is obliged to keep his mouth shut whether he wants to or not.

The majority of the people of course consider this offering to the kitchen spirit to be merely a ceremony. But if it is that easy to settle one's debts with the spirits, humans do not let themselves be similarly appeased. All earthly debts must be settled before New Year's Day, and this can be difficult for many a poor devil, who perhaps long gave his last valuable things to the pawnbroker. But the old tradition must be observed, and so he has to borrow from Peter to pay Paul. Bankruptcies are frequent in the New Year's week, thefts also, for money one *must* have, otherwise there will not be any "Happy New Year."

Life in the streets reaches its high point on New Year's Eve. People run from shop to shop to pay their debts or demand what they are owed. The farmers hurry to get their purchases done so they can get back to their farms before dark, and thousands stream into town to visit with relatives and friends on the holiday. Small shops are filled to overflowing with customers, and the merchants often resort to cutting prices in hope of getting enough coin to meet the banker's or wholesaler's demands later in the evening.

But then the hour of deliverance finally comes for China's tired millions — the midnight hour is struck, and the New Year's celebration begins — not with peace exactly, but with earsplitting joyous outbursts.

The Chinese have always been fond of all kinds of fireworks, even centuries before the Europeans discovered gunpowder, and the son of Heaven must be oddly constituted who does not contribute his utmost to augment the infernal hubbub of exploding and illuminating rockets that salute the new year's arrival.

The fireworks sellers enjoy a colossal run on their wares throughout the New Year's week for every respectable family must expend at least a couple of thousand red "bang pipes" to drive evil spirits away from their homes. At least this is their excuse, but there are hardly many who worry about evil spirits during the hubbub.

The bang pipes, which are the Chinese's favorite fireworks, are about 10 centimeters long and are tied together like the tails on our paper kites, but much closer together, sometimes a couple of hundred on each string. The tail is tied to a small stick, the end is lit, and the music begins. It can often last for ten minutes. When thousands of such "tails" are lit at once out in the street, one may get a sense of the Chinese people's *feu de joie* on New Year's Eve – an enormous din that some cranky Europeans apparently do not appreciate as they should. Some esteemed personage will always write a "letter to the editor" demanding that the European community councils in the treaty ports prevent a recurrence the following year. But the next year arrives, and it is just as bad for the nervous dears, since the community councils' leaders know from experience that police orders carry little weight if they conflict with the traditions of the country.

Eventually the tumult subsides and everybody go home for now New Year's is to be celebrated in the family circle with solemn ceremonies, which often may last until sunrise.

Let us look into the parlor of a prosperous middleclass family. Before one of the windows stands a large black-lacquered table on which have been placed a porcelain dish with rice, several bowls with vegetables, a half score cups of tea and wine, a couple of red candles, some incense sticks, and a copy of the almanac.

On a bench in another corner of the room stand a whole row of doodads that looks like small bookcases. The doors are open, and red panels with gilded inscriptions are visible inside. These are the names of deceased ancestors. Garlands of living and artificial flower are arranged around the cabinets and several vases with filled with garden-fresh hyacinths, narcissus, and other ornamental flowers. The father of the house kneels down on a pillow before the abovementioned table, takes the lit incense sticks in his right hand, and bows his head three times to the floor, while he thanks Heaven and Earth for all the good things of the old year and prays that these blessings will continue to rest on his house.

A similar ceremony is conducted before the ancestors' memorial tablets and then it is time for the living. The oldest members of the household – whether it is the grandparents or the father and mother – are seated in the high-seat, and the children in turn kneel and congratulate them for having lived through the past year. We may be sure that this is well meant, since in no place on earth are the family ties stronger than among the Chinese; no other nation takes the fourth commandment so near to heart.

At the same time an official ceremony is performed – perhaps not as deeply felt, but of great political import. It is what the Chinese call *San Kuei Chiu Kou*, or "the three prostrations and nine bows."

Peking's highest dignitaries assemble in the emperor's palace before sunrise to wish their ruler a good new year. The same ceremony must be performed by all the mandarins in the realm, but, since the emperor cannot be everywhere at once, there is in every city a temple containing a more or less faithful replica of the emperor's throne. A long, red wooden tablet decorated with the symbol of the emperor's power – gilded dragons – and with the inscription *Fang Ching Huang-ti Wansui Wansu*, "May the emperor live myriads of years," is placed upon this.

It must certainly be a fascinating moment when this act of homage is performed in the temples, when all the most powerful men in the empire in ceremonial dress kneel before the symbol of the highest sovereign power here on earth, while the fading starlight casts its faint radiance over the scene.

This ceremony is very symbolic of the emperor's position in society. He is looked at as the whole nation's "father," and it is exactly the same reverence as is shown to parents around in people's homes at the same moment.

The morning of New Year's Day, almost the whole nation lies sound asleep in the arms of Morpheus. When we take a walk through the streets, we hardly recognize them, so different are they from the day before. They seem to be twice as wide, since all the small moveable shops on both sides have been removed, and everything alive – people or animals

– that otherwise mill around in profusion are safely inside their locked doors.

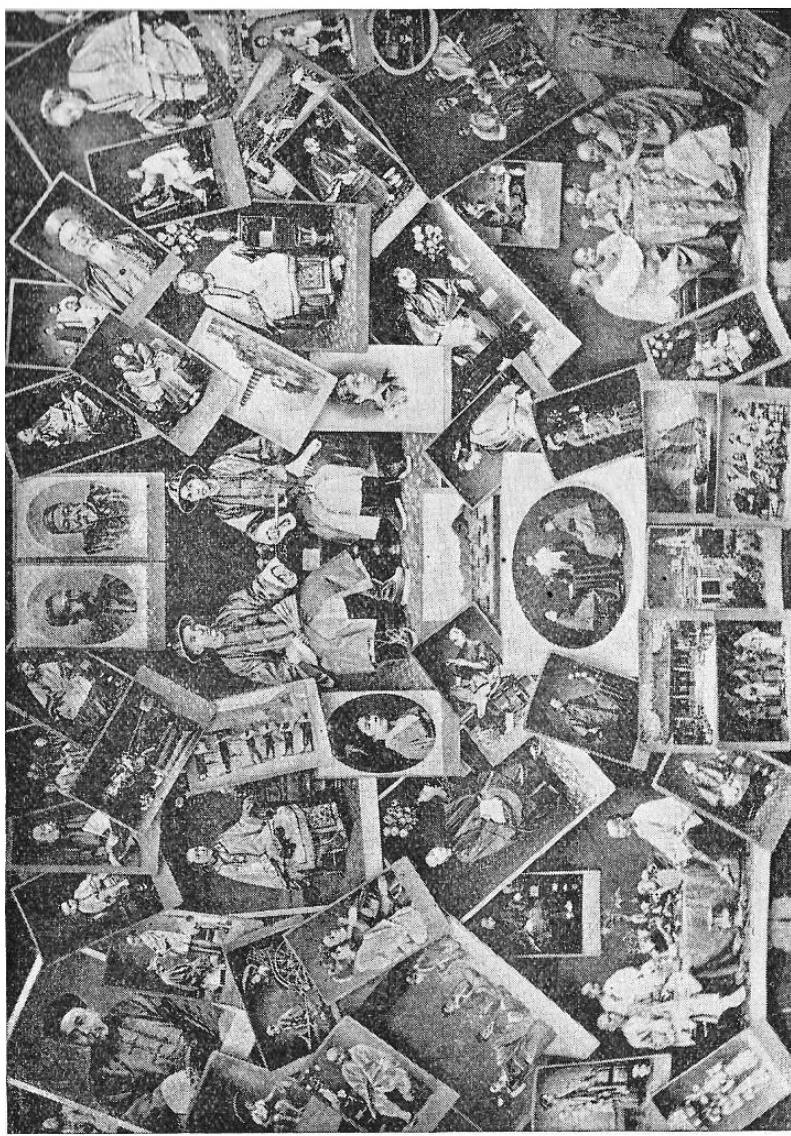
The symbols of happiness meet us everywhere in the form of red banners with the sign *hok* – luck – and the streets seem to be covered with a single continuous carpet, but it is only the burned-out casings of the red bang pipes that a couple of hours before had announced the opening of the New Year's celebrations.

Among all these crimson remains of the previous night's pageantry, we also notice numerous yellow strips of paper on the shop portals. They are prayers of thanksgiving from the owners who had a profitable business in the past year.

A few houses are decorated with blue paper strips that warn that the angel of death has visited the family. There are no New Year's festivities in these homes.

Later in the forenoon the streets liven up again for now all respectable families will visit their relatives and friends. The calling cards used for this occasion are usually imprinted with three figures: A stork, a child, and a mandarin – symbolic of the Chinese people's deepest wishes: A long life, many children, and official employment.

Everyone are dressed in their most elegant and expensive set of clothes, which often compete with birds of paradise in the multiplicity of their colors. Europeans may be surprised over all the mandarins they see in the streets – and on foot. But as the saying goes, one should not judge the dog by its coat, for many of these gentlemen are simply rich show-offs, who make use of the license to wear any official attire whatever during the New Year's holiday.



A European New Year's card with Chinese motifs.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

But it is not difficult to distinguish them from "the genuine article" today, since these pass through the streets in quite unusual processions. On New Year's Day it is customary that all subordinate officials along with their "good wishes" also bring their superiors some more tangible presents. The same is the case between families as it is with us.

In the afternoon the festivities really get going. All kinds of jugglers and acrobats appear at the corners and exhibit their skills for an admiring public, while musicians treat with music that, to say it mildly, does not appeal to European ears. The bang pipes again take up with even more earsplitting noise than the previous night, and when darkness falls, the whole city is brilliantly lit up by the most varicolored fireworks displays. The Chinese are known for their frugal sense, but this impediment is thrown overboard in the happy New Year's celebrations, and it is quite unbelievable what sums of money go up in smoke. This money is still put to relatively better use than in Europe, where the working classes usually prefer "firewater" to fireworks.

The day is also celebrated aboard "*Ling-Fêng*," and that with double gloss, since New Year's Day has coincidentally fallen on the 29th of January – my 24th birthday.

Since noon the crew has been occupied with preparations for a large fireworks display. Several hundred colored lanterns to be lighted with chemical incendiaries have been bought by the officers.

The whole supply of fireworks must be expended on this occasion, since the captain thinks that the rockets and lights will become unusable if they are stored too long. By seven

o'clock everything is ready, and I set off with the steam sloop to collect our guests for the evening's banquet.

On the pier stand the Most Reverend Benjamin Christians tastefully attired as a bishop of the Franciscan Order, and Père Braun – my dearest and best friends in China. They step down into the boat with the other invited guests, and the boat sets off as I at the same time give a signal with the steam whistle – and as by magic the river is illuminated far and wide in all the colors of the rainbow. The rockets whizz high up into the sky; some explode with a bang and cast a handful of brilliant shooting stars over the dark waters.

Sailors stand on all the yardarms swinging roman candles and suns. From the ends of the foreyard dangle some incredibly long bangtails spurting sparks as if possessed by evil spirits.

But the most beautiful sight of all, are the hundreds of colored lanterns that sway over the ship from bowsprit to taffrail with the inscription *Kung-ho Hsin-shi* – Happy New Year! – and its double meaning.

This birthday I will never forget.

Chapter Thirteen

A dinner with the banker Ching Lao-ping.

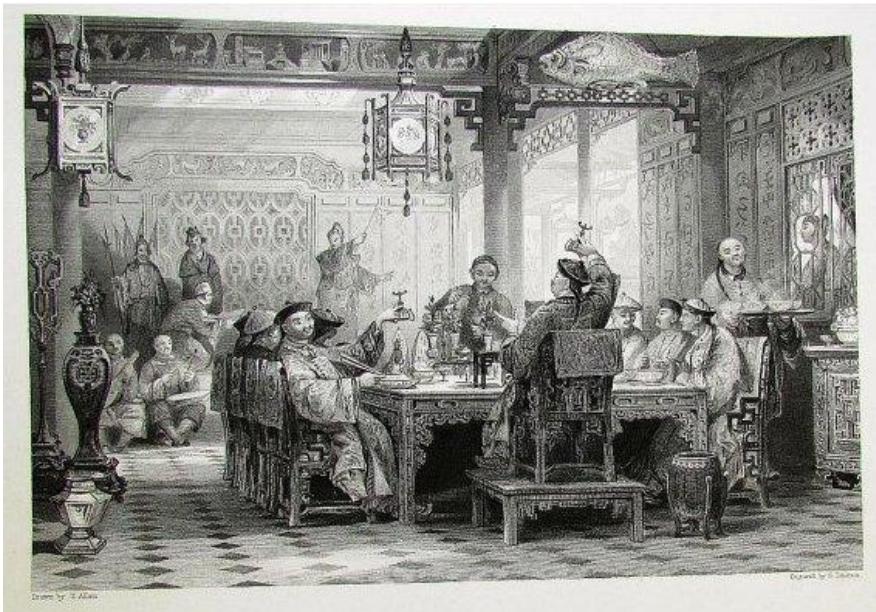
The well-to-do families always give parties during the festive New Year's holiday. Through my close friend Ho Chao-kuin I received an invitation to dinner with a wealthy banker named Ching Lao-ping.

Mr. Ching owns, like most wealthy people in China, his own temple or "the family's gathering hall," where their ancestors' memorial tablets are displayed. The Chinese usually hold their parties here. They do not find anything offensive in this custom, quite to the contrary. When mandarins invite consuls or other European officials for some occasion or other, it is very common that the event takes place in a temple.

The host met me with a smiling face as I entered, and after we had bowed down for each other, struck the palms of our hands together and moved them up and down a few times with the common exclamation *Hao, hao*, which altogether answers to the European "*Bonjour*," etc., I am led into the hall, where the host's son and Ho Chao-kuin, our teacher, met me and shook hands with me in the European manner, but I

quietly whispered to them that the "barbarian" customs should be suspended for the time being. Chinese party, Chinese etiquette.

Ho told another gentleman what I had said, and the whole company seemed to accept my remark with approval.



A festive get-together.

The hall was very elegantly furnished. Carved and gilded chairs with soft cushions with red cloth covers. The floor is covered with grey-white marble tiles, and on the walls hang roll after roll of silk or paper, some with inscriptions from the Chinese Bible – the *9 King** – some with fine paintings by native artists.

* The writings of Confucius, Mencius, and Lao-tse.

A half score large glass lanterns hang from the ceiling. Their red candles are already lit since it is almost 5 o'clock. The glass plates of the lanterns are decorated with caricature drawings that depict social scenes and add to the festive ambience when lit. In one corner of the hall the family's most cherished objects can be seen. A lot of red wooden tablets upon which their deceased ancestors' names are inscribed with gold characters are displayed on a low platform. Red wax tapers are lighted before each of these and beside them stand porcelain bowls filled with fruits and pastries – a symbol that the family has not forgotten their dead.

And now to the table. The host bids us to take our places, which are arranged according to the guests' ranks and positions in society. As customary, everybody keep their hats and caps on, since it is considered impolite to remove them.

Before each place setting stand a wine-cup and a small plate which is divided in the middle and filled with almonds and melon seeds. Further, there is a sauce bowl beside which lie a couple of ivory chopsticks, a three inch long porcelain spoon, and several squares of paper with which to dry one's mouth.

In the middle of the table stands a brown lacquered tray which is divided into a score partitions. In each of these there is a small bowl filled with dried and preserved fruits, sliced ham, smoked minnows, etc.

The host first pours wine into his cup while he bows and turns his face towards his ancestors' shrine – this is the memorial toast, our *bragebeger*. Thereafter he fills the guests' cups, and as he does, each guest bows and holds his cups in his left hand. The host gives a sign, wishes us welcome, and

everybody empty their cups together. This ends the ceremonial part of the dinner, and the servants carry in the dishes:

1. Roast *samlai* with spicy sauce.
2. Sliced hardboiled eggs and champignons.
3. Poultry in sauce with sliced ham.
4. Wild ducks with stewed bamboo sprouts.
5. Shredded pork with rice flour sauce.
6. Roast pheasant with stewed cabbage and carrots.
7. Boiled fish.
8. Marrow cooked in oil.
9. Miscellaneous bakery products.
10. Roast hare with hot sauce.
11. Stewed crab, and finally:
12. Swallows nest soup and rice.

Between each course one takes a couple of puffs from the common silver pipes, which are tended by a servant who stands behind each guest.

It is of course a given that all food must be cut up in suitably small pieces; otherwise one would have to use knife and fork in the European manner. I was offered such implements, but politely declined, since I had acquired a minimal degree of proficiency in the use of *Kwat-tze*, as chopsticks are called in Chinese, by a little private practice in Ho's home beforehand.

The "barbarians'" practice of serving the food from the table is quite incomprehensible for the Chinese. I once saw a very amusing caricature of a dinner in a European home, where the host stood struggling with carving a large roast

with sweat pouring down his face. Why not have the servants do that? ask the Chinese.

As may be seen from the menu, there are no dishes that we barbarians cannot eat with a good appetite. Except for the sauces, which I was not accustomed to, I thoroughly enjoyed the dinner, and we may well take this dinner as a typical example of what is served in an affluent Chinese home. Boiled rice play a larger or lesser role, all according to what the host's financial situation may be.

After the meal, small silver bowls with warm water was carried around, so that the guests could wipe their fingers with a small hand-towel dipped in the water.

The table was cleared, pipes were lit, and tea was served.

Chapter Fourteen

Ho Chao-kuin – Bishop Benjamin Christians and Père Braun – The pagoda –Wen Siang-ling's wedding.

Despite the somewhat monotonous life we led during our long stay in Ichang, I still found that time passed much too quickly. There was so much to study, so much to learn, and I constantly found new fields to explore.

When I was not occupied by my shipboard duties or in studying the language, I often wandered around town with Ho Chao-kuin and visited his acquaintances.

My Chinese friend fluently speaks and writes several European languages. He is also well acquainted with the best of our literature – especially in the area of philosophy – and thus he is better able than most to expound and explain the apparent great difference between the results of Chinese and European thinking.

Our discussions in his home about the advantages of Chinese and Western civilization could become quite warm at times – we were both young, but then his little wife almost always came tripping in on her tiny doll's feet and offered us a cup of tea and cookies. Her lovely smile calmed our

tempers and we went over to less controversial subjects and so could continue until far into the evening, sitting each on his side of a little tea table. (See the title page.)

Among the Europeans, I particularly enjoyed the company of Bishop Christians of the Franciscan Order and Père Braun in Ichang. The Most Reverend is Belgian by birth and one of the most brilliant men I have met. Père Braun is more serious and reserved in his demeanor – the former German artillery officer sometimes came to the surface – but in the bishop's presence he would thaw out and told one lively story after the other from his time as an officer or as a student at the university in Bonn. However, most often we discussed religious subjects, and I frequently think back with pleasure about the many informative and interesting evenings we spent together.

About four kilometers below Ichang there is an old and venerable pagoda. It almost always was the goal of the officers' walks. From the top floor we had a lovely view out over the Yangtze Kiang. We could sit there and dream about our futures in undisturbed quiet. I must sometimes smile when I think of the vagaries of fate. From one end of the world to the other I have traveled with a constantly increasing thirst for knowledge. It has brought me out to East-Asia, and here I now sit in the top of a pagoda dressed in a Chinese uniform – wonder where whimsical fortune may yet take me before I am thirty years old?

I give my imagination loose reins; I build a career – fortuitous and bright, of course – such as the young always dream of, before life shows its wrong side up.

My thoughts fly farther and farther from my own selfish concerns to my home country, to my loved ones. Homesickness overwhelms me – home, family – and I feel a tear on my cheek.

Nonsense – – I tear myself out of my imagination's melancholy mood.

Dreaming!

But what is life worth without dreams? When your goal is reached, then what? Oh, Lord who rules all our lives, let me always be allowed to dream!

*

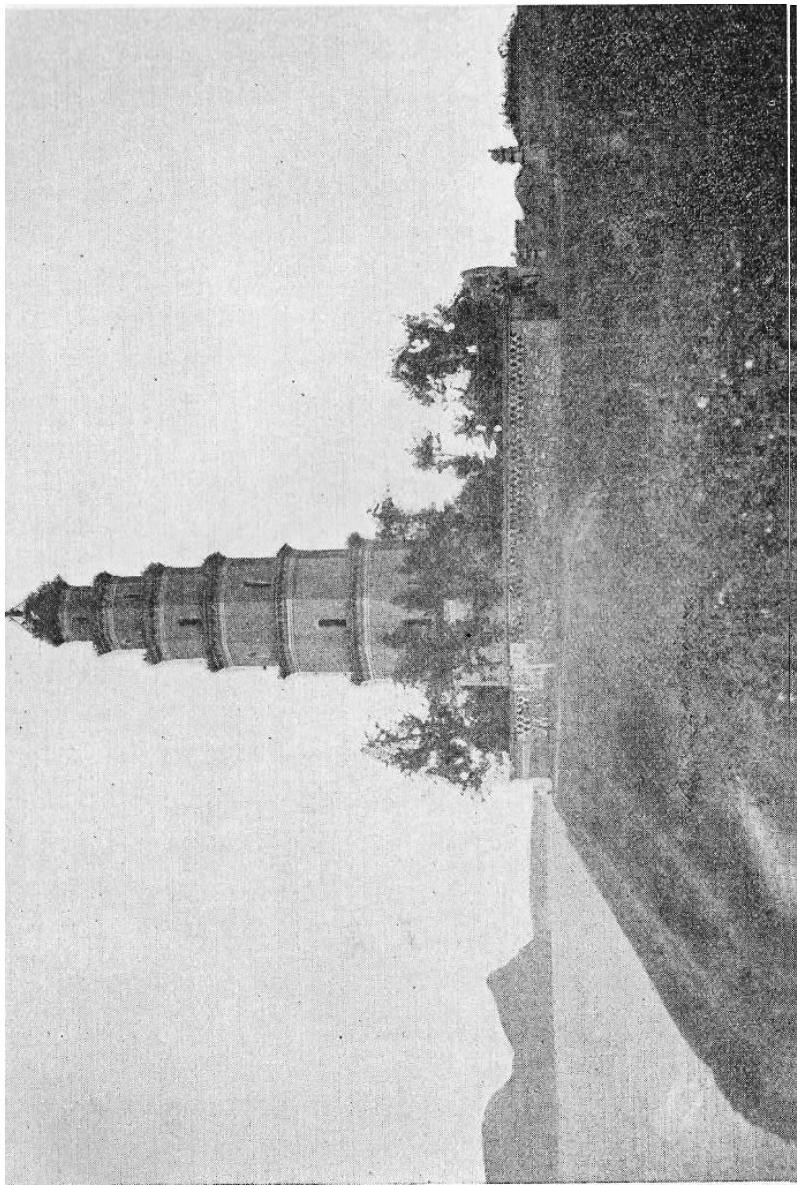
*

*

I had several times spoken to Ho Chao-kuin about my wish to attend a Chinese wedding.

He had verbally given me very detailed descriptions during the long winter evenings about the ceremonies common at such events, but I always want to see for myself, since the impressions then last longer and easier to set down on paper. And I also would like to have another pleasant memory from "the land of the heathen."

My wish was fulfilled a couple of weeks before we left Ichang. A young Chinese, whom I used to see in Ho's home, was to marry Colonel Wu Chao-chen's beautiful daughter, and some days before this event was to take place I received a ca. 20 cm. long by 5 cm. wide calling card on red paper, on which something like the following was written:



The pagoda at Ichang.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

"Most esteemed elder brother!

Chu Wil-yang^{*} *Erh-faa* 2nd lieutenant imperial cruiser
"Ling-Fêng" is sent a heartfelt greeting. On the occasion of a joyful celebration, namely my marriage to the virtuous A Lu-li, you will gladden my heart by accepting an invitation.

2nd month, 10th day

Your most obedient servant,
Wen Siang-ling

Well, I would be more than happy to gladden his heart, so I got Ho to draw up a reply on an equally large piece of paper with many poetic congratulations and stating that it would truly be a great joy for his most obedient servant, Chu Wil-yang, to be present at his most honored elder brother's nuptials.

The day arrived with sunshine and a cloud-free sky, so it looked like the all-knowing Chinese almanac had forecast correctly that the 10th day of the 2nd month would be an auspicious day to celebrate a wedding. Ho was to be the groom's "best man" and bring the exquisite A Lu-li. I accompanied him to the parents of the bride in order to follow the proceedings from beginning to end, and we arrived there by 6 o'clock dressed in our formal best.

The bride had been occupied from the early morning getting ready, and in this important business she surely had gotten more help from well-intentioned friends than she really cared for, since when we entered the reception hall, she stood surrounded by at least half a score more or less Venus-like

* Chu Wil-yang is my name as a Chinese officer.

ladies, who were all crying as if there was a funeral in the house. The tears dried up when they caught sight of the European, and they would presumably have relieved the bride of their siege and disappeared if the "best man" had not immediately explained that this was his foreign friend who wished to pay them a visit.

Miss A Lu-li had become quite unrecognizable since I last saw her, but not to her advantage – at least in my opinion. Her exquisite breeches and blouse, embellished with the most superb embroideries were worth seeing; they were of the most beautiful of that kind that I have come across. Her hair was also done up in a manner that could be attractive for a European – but her beautiful, smiling face! Why in the world should it be hidden under a mask of powder? Well, it is customary and traditional. And the lips painted blood red! No need for that; they were lovely as they were.

No, little A Lu-li, nature suits you best. Wait until you are old and wrinkled. If I know your groom right, he will say the same. But you probably have to follow custom and tradition, and that is why you have assumed such an unnatural ceremonial and serious appearance.

This was my impression, when I saw the Chinese bride, but there was not time for much reflection for everything was now ready for departure.

The procession lined up. In front there are several kettledrummers in bright red costumes with red banners fluttering at the ends of the carrier poles. Behind them follow some servants carrying large wooden tablets inscribed with gilded characters informing the spectators about the bridal pair's parents, their social rank, etc., etc. After them comes a

throng of lantern carriers and lictors with long gilded staves with which to clear the way in case some interlopers should dare interfere with the bridal procession's progress. After them again, a musical corps that brings forth tones that could cause a high-strung European to cry out in pain. Then a throng of bearers carrying presents followed by a red, curtained sedan chair decorated with gilded sprigs – symbolic of wealth and numerous offspring. Inside lie jewels and valuable objects destined for the new household. After that come Ho and a couple of the bride's brothers and finally the bride herself, stiff and white as a plaster figurine, in an enclosed sedan chair.

Before Miss A Lu-li left her parents' home, a tray of glowing coals was set on the threshold and the bride was carried across this by a couple of the family's female members – a ceremony that is performed at all weddings, so that the family's luck will not leave with the bride.

The procession snaked its way through Ichang's narrow streets, and I stepped into my blue sedan chair to get to the groom's home by a detour before the cavalcade arrived there.

Wen Siang-ling was extremely happy. He had often had occasion to meet Miss Wu in her father's home, where the social atmosphere was more free than usual according to Chinese customs – something often seen in the treaty ports – and both felt a definite attraction for the other.

I believe the phlegmatic Chinese feels less of the stormy feelings of love than the European experiences for the object of his heart's desire. Even if this is not the case, he is too much a slave to ceremony and etiquette to show his feelings, even to his nearest relatives.

I could hardly keep from laughing at the sight of the two young people when they met to be joined in matrimony under the earsplitting tones of the orchestra and bangs of exploding fireworks.

Oh, it certainly looked like it was the first time the bridal couple had met, but any meeting of souls surely did not occur – at least not judging from appearances.

A lot of ceremonial greetings, that was all, and then the groom carefully lifts the veil from A Lu-li's beautiful face and gives her – a kiss you might think? No, this would be unheard of.

Parenthetically, a lover never kisses his beloved on the mouth, but on the tiny little feet – and this, of course, cannot take place in the presence of the guests.

Instead Wang Siang-ling sends his beloved a surprised look, as if he has never seen the lovely A Lu-li before – and which he should not have if strict etiquette had been followed.

The colonel's daughter also has been well instructed. She too can play-act and beholds her groom in the same manner without smiling or the least show of emotion.

Followed by all the guests the bridal couple then went into the bridal chamber where they first drank wine from a couple of porcelain bowls joined by a string of red silk and pronounced their wows of marriage. Then they kneeled down by an altar and quietly prayed for Heaven and their ancestors to bless their union.

After this, the groom's father read loudly and distinctly the marriage contract, wherein the bride's dowry was itemized

to the last detail, and then Wen Siang-ling and A Lu-li were declared to be a "rightfully married couple."

The doors to the banquet room were now opened wide, and the guests were seated around the usual small square tables; four persons at each.

The room was divided into two by a screen of carved and gilded woodwork, and according to Chinese custom the bride with her female guests stayed in one section and the men in the other, since etiquette forbids that the sexes eat together, even on an occasion such as this.

But it looked like the bride would not be permitted to dine in peace for the first hour because a steady stream of acquaintances came into the room and wished to see her — something that all brides must submit to. It is also permitted — or rather, it is established custom that the visitors make all possible remarks about the young matron's eyes, ears, nose, mouth, feet, etc. to the general merriment of those present.

These personal remarks must be anything but agreeable, but etiquette demands that the bride remains serene and composed without blushing or smiling, and Mrs. Wen Siang-ling passed the test with honors.

Later in the evening, the bride was left in peace, and the party got gayer and gayer as the various dishes disappeared.

The groom at last thanked the guests in a pretty and poetic speech for the great honor they had done him by being present at his wedding. Even I got my just deserts in that Wen hoped that my presence here this evening would be a sign of closer friendship between the Chinese nation and the Europeans in the future. He hoped that when I eventually

traveled back to my distant native country, I would hold my Chinese friends in Ichang in fond memory.

To this I replied, assisted by Mr. Ho, with heartfelt good wishes for the bridal pair's future.

The guests rose from the tables shortly thereafter, and the bride came in and thanked the gentlemen present for having honored the occasion with their presence.

It was almost midnight when we broke up and left the party, accompanied by servants who carried red lanterns before our sedan chairs, but it was daylight before I could fall asleep after having been to Wen Sang-ling and A Lu-li's wedding.

Chapter Fifteen

Down the Yangtze Kiang and northward to the war zone.

Spring came, and great masses of water from Tibet's melting snows came rushing down the Yangtze Kiang.

The river became wider and wider. Soon there would be 10 feet of water by Sunday Island, and "*Ling-Fêng*" could then expect orders to go downstream.

We were not at all pleased with the thought of leaving Ichang. A half year's stay had tied us to the place with many bonds. No one was anxious to return to "civilization."

But "*Ling-Fêng*" was in demand for deployment elsewhere, and so the noisome telegram finally came: "Proceed carefully down to Shanghai."

Goodbye parties ashore and onboard – heartfelt farewells.

One morning the cannon thundered in salute to the city, and we glided slowly down the river. We passed the pagoda, and the officers gazed with sorrow on the old friend they had so often visited.

*

A last farewell, and a bend in the river hides it from our view.

We arrived in Shanghai in early May without any mishaps on the way. Here we received further orders to go northward.

In the course of the summer, "*Ling-Fêng*" cruised around the scene of the last war and several times visited Port Arthur, Wei-hai-wei, and several other places that have played a role in the war. This local knowledge has significantly aided in working out the second part of this volume: "The War in East-Asia."

II

THE WAR IN EAST-ASIA

(This page intentionally left blank.)

Chapter Sixteen

Japan and the Japanese

Ji-pêñ fifty years ago – Future prospects – Conflict with the barbarians of the 19th century – The Japanese forget their domestic differences in order to defend their country – The mikado and his advisers lead the way for social reforms – The raptors from the West did not find any carrion – The new Japan.

Before we continue, I will write a few words about the small Japanese empire, that has not only dared to declare war on the world's largest nation, but has forced it to accept a humiliating peace.

Ji-pêñ,^{*} the island empire farthest east, fifty years ago was considered as a symbol of all that was beautiful, enchanting, and strange; it was an Eastern Atlantis swathed in dazzling colors.

The holy *mikado*, who according to legend was descended from the sun goddess, was hidden behind a screen of ambitious and ruthless feudal lords. No vulgar eyes were allowed to view his godlike person. He never left his palace for even the sun was not deemed worthy to shine upon him.

* "Land of the Rising Sun." Europeans turned *Ji-pêñ* into *Japan*.

It was almost certain death for the West's barbarians to visit the island empire's inhospitable shores. The sight of a stranger affected the Japanese like a red cloth on a bull, but now such reactions are unthinkable.

The far East and the far West have extended their hands to each other as equals. The barbarians are now not only allowed to ogle *Ji-pêñ*'s holy *Mikado*, but some select ones are even invited as honored guests on festive occasions.

Japan is the land of the future. Within a few years the Japanese sun ensign may well wave over the Philippines and other island groups in the East-Asian archipelago. In the near future we will see the small Japanese compete with the English and the Germans in the industrial arena.

Before the end of the century the romantic mist that still shrouds the beautiful isles will vanish as dew before the rising sun, and thousands of English and American tourists will then have to seek other, more unexplored regions, where they with new complacency can sign their names in the visitors' book.

*

*

*

The great social revolution in Japan began in 1868.

Most authors, who have dealt with this period in the islands' history, have told us that it came completely unexpectedly – quite like a miracle. But there are not many miracles in our days, and the social revolution in Japan was not one of them. It was simply a link in the progress of history – the eruption of a trend that had grown in the nation

for centuries*, but the aggressive behavior of the Western powers caused it to break out earlier than it otherwise would have done.

In 1840 the cannon of "civilization" thundered on China's coasts, and the din was heard in the Japanese islands. The political ferment increased and resulted in the formation of a progressive party and a nationalist party.

The national party asserted that the Chinese were just spineless cowards, and if the Europeans dared come out to the islands they would get a much warmer reception than in China.

The progressive party, on the other hand, had a clearer view of the imminent danger approaching from the West. They followed the progression of events on the Asiatic mainland and immediately understood that these Europeans had greater goals in mind now than in the 16th century, when piracy and slave trading seemed to be their main occupations in life.[†]

The progressive party realized that the Europeans would not be content with the subjugation of China. They would come over to Japan too, and then they would say: We are the strongest, and in this century we will not permit any nation to isolate itself. We will force our friendship on you and make you buy our products." The progressive party therefore contended that it would be wiser to open up the ports voluntarily.

* See the history of Japan in "From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain" by this author.

[†] The Europeans who reached the Japanese coasts in the 16th century consisted mostly of Portuguese pirates and slave traders.

A few years later Commodore Perry arrived in Japan with an American squadron on a half political, half commercial mission.

Through negotiations with the Japanese government, he succeeded in getting a few ports "opened" for foreign trade, and under the lively intercourse that now began between the Western nations and the Japanese, the nationalist party and the progressive party both had their eyes opened to the necessity for accepting Western civilization – especially in regard to military technology.

The barbarians' weapons must be acquired in order to halt the barbarians' lawless and shameless behavior.

They further realized that if the nation's independence was to be maintained, they had to stand together – *all together*. And then came the great moment in Japan's history. They forgot their internal differences. Patriotic lords offered their fiefs and inherited privileges on the altar of their fatherland, and the *shogun* – their hereditary leader – voluntarily surrendered his great powers to his rightful lord, the *mikado*, because he saw that only a united empire with a strong central authority would be able to guard the nation's independence.

It was a labor of Hercules that the young *mikado*, Mutsu Hito,* and his advisers undertook. New blood had to be infused into the nation's veins. Japan must be energized in both economic and military respects in order to resist the greedy Christian nations that cruised like hawks around the island empire. — — —

* Mutsu Hito, the 122nd emperor of his family, was 18 years old when he ascended to the throne in 1867.

But the raptors found no carrion. The Japanese reformers led by the emperor have lived up to their challenge. The country came victoriously out of its confrontation with the West – and at the same time learned to value our civilization's good and bad elements according to their merits.

Yes, the Japanese have even won the barbarians' respect – and that says something after the low level of morality the Western nations showed during the country's time of need.

*

*

*

For more than thirty years the Japanese have swarmed around Europe like bees gathering honey from all the flowers.

They went to Germany for most of their new constitution and blue and yellow artillery uniform and some of their military organization. From England they brought the railroad system, engineers, titles, and court etiquette. From France they got part of the constitution, the army organization, cookbooks, etc., etc.; and thus a little from each country where they found something worth emulating.

We have seen Japanese tourists in most of America and Europe's major cities with notebooks in hand and always ready to write down new information. In universities, in court rooms, in factories – in short, anywhere where there might be something to learn.

And the gathered knowledge is easily assimilated in Japanese heads as is shown by the practical results of the information the returning students have brought to their homeland. On the basis of their impartial observations, the

most modern educational facilities have been established, even for the weaker sex – and that says a lot in an Asian nation. The countryside is crisscrossed by railways from north to south. Its telegraph and mail systems can be measured against those of any European country. Electric lighting has been introduced in all the large cities – and I often found even villages shining brightly with electric lights. Steamships have taken over the traffic on the lakes, and most of the coastal traffic is also in native hands.

Nor should we forget the military organization, which has cost the empire enormous sums, but at the same time ensured a nation's most valuable possession – its independence.

That the islanders' old warrior spirit has flared up too strongly by the sight of their magnificent army and navy – that is one of the downsides of progress, which I will not enter into for now.

When a Japanese historian sometime in the future writes of the last half of the 19th century, he will have to admit that his nation was unusually fortunate in having so many great patriotic citizens during these difficult times of radical changes, and that the country's "opening" took place in the age of steel, steam, and electricity.

Chapter Seventeen

The fight for Korea

Attacks on Korea's relationship with China – The king of Korea's letter to the treaty powers – Russia's growing influence in Asia – The political significance of the Trans-Siberian Railway – The Japanese forestall the Russians.

We understand that the reason must be a very serious one, when lately the eyes of the whole civilized world are directed with acute attention toward East-Asia, since the literate public in Europe and America otherwise generally show little interest in these "far away" places.

Everyone presumably remember the kingdom of Korea from their geography lessons – the large peninsula stretching from northern China toward Japan; so close that from Nagasaki one can make out its high mountains on the horizon.

This "outgrowth" on the Chinese giant, which the Japanese wish to amputate, is a little smaller than Norway in area and has about 10 million inhabitants.

Attached to the mainland and bordering to China, Korea seems destined by nature to become a part of the empire, and this the "Land of the Morning Calm" has effectively been

despite the desperate efforts Western diplomats have made to convince their fellow citizens otherwise.

"Why? For what purpose?" many of us may ask in wonderment.

Well, because the so-called Christian major powers usually have enough of a sense of shame when it is about acquiring colonies that they seek cover for their bad consciences. I rightfully call them "so-called Christian major powers" because the gap between Christian teaching – its uplifting and cleansing effect on individuals – and the spirit of modern society is deeper and wider than the ocean. There is a great divide between the individual persons' morals and those of their governments.

But even governments are sometimes subject to a bashful sentiment, and therefore its guardians – the statesmen – are careful to cover the sensitive spot with a fig leaf when they are on the prowl for other peoples' property.

These fig leaves are given diverse names. Partly it is about defending their "rights," partly about "interests," and even though these rights and interests most often are of the airiest kind, the moral sense of the colonizing powers seem to be easily lulled into sleep by such bureaucratic euphemisms.

Shortly after the Europeans and Americans arrived in Korea their political geniuses realized the advantages of getting rights and interests on this fertile and mineral rich peninsula with its numerous excellent harbors. But this was not so easily accomplished as long as Korea was considered a Chinese vassal state, and, practically speaking, the peninsula had been such since the beginning of our time. Korea, like Japan, has received its culture from China.

China's policy through the centuries has always been to leave its vassal states as much independence as possible, since the emperor considered himself the vassal potentates' protector rather than their overlord.

For centuries the only indication of Korea's dependency status has been the sending of an annual deputation that brought gifts from the king to his protector, the emperor of China. In return the king was given an almanac. The Chinese consider the fact that a country uses their almanac, their calendar of time, as symbolic of a dependent state. It has also been considered obligatory to obtain the emperor's assent before a new king could ascend to the throne.

By our standards this vassal relationship seems rather loose, but if we study the Chinese system of government, we find that it is not much different from those with the several provinces.

However, impartial studies of Chinese institutions have not been the diplomatic agencies strong side, and they therefore thought it would be an easy matter to cut the "weak" ties that bound Korea to China, and when the "outgrowth" had been detached they would fall upon it like vultures over carrion.

Therefore they had all the way back to the 1860s gone systematically to work on undermining the Chinese influence in Korea, while at the same time through the press giving the folks back home the idea that no injustice would be done if the ownerless country was taken over by the "civilized" powers.

Let us just take a look at the maps of East-Asia. On 9 out of 10 we will find that Korea is shown with a different color

than China. Even the cartographers have lent their hands to this political deception.

We detect the same intent when the diplomatic relations were to be established.

The United States was the first Western power that wished to conclude a treaty with Korea as an *independent* state. The king then requested that the *Chinese* foreign secretary, Li Hung-chang, treat with the American envoy. Li, reasonably enough, demanded that America should acknowledge China's protectorate over Korea in the treaty's 1st paragraph. But since it was more important for the United States to establish Korea's "independence" than to conclude the treaty, its envoy absolutely refused to accede to the Chinese foreign secretary's demand. Li then thought it best to yield – or appear to – and the treaty was signed in Chemulpo 22 May 1882. Similar treaties with the European powers were signed in the same year.

According to these the respective countries would establish embassies in Korea's capital, Seoul, which according to *our* concepts of international law must be seen as a mark of *independence*.

So, now the business was well under way, and the loose ties that up to now had bound Korea to China appeared to have been severed. But when the king sent his envoys out into the world, they brought with them in addition to the treaties and their accreditations a separate document, which came as an unwelcome surprise to the gentlemen who have been agitating for colonial expansion in the East.

The American version read as follows:

"His Majesty, the King of Cho-sen*, hereby states for your information: Cho-sen has from ancient times been a Chinese tributary state. However, the kings of Cho-sen have up to now exercised full sovereignty in all matters that pertain to the domestic governance and relations to foreign powers.

Cho-sen and the United States have now concluded a treaty on the basis of equality. With regard to the obligations that rest on Cho-sen as a Chinese tributary state, these are no concern of the United States. It seems to be our duty to submit this declaration as an addendum to the concluded treaty.

To the President of the United States,

Seoul, 13th of May 1882."

In this document the king of Korea in plain and clear words acknowledges his country's tributary relationship with China, and to give this statement an even clearer expression, His Majesty at the same time sent a longer letter to the emperor explaining why he, despite his position as a vassal, has considered it expedient to accredit legations with foreign governments.

But what does the American president do? He simply ignores the king's letter and receives the Korean envoy as the representative of an independent state, and Europe follows his example though the first paragraph of Li Hung-chang's instructions to the Korean king states:

* *Cho-sen* is the usual Korean name for their country. It means something like "Land of the Morning Calm."

"Upon the Korean representative's arrival, he is to pay a visit to the Chinese legation and request the ambassador to represent him before that state's foreign ministry."

This independent character that the Korean representative got from the beginning, he still has, and China has closed its eyes. Those who knew of the actual proceedings must surely have been amused by the blaring headlines by which the foreign press in August 1894 informed their readers that the king of Korea had declared his independence – 12 years after the respective governments for the first time received Korea's envoys as representatives of a sovereign state.

This official declaration of independence must have been a little embarrassing for the colony-greedy major powers, since everybody now clearly understood that the previous "independence" had only been a diplomatic sham.

*

Let us look at what interest the major powers might have in an ownerless or independent Korea.

Take Russia, for example. This empire has always felt a need to expand – especially toward the sea. The colossus exerts a heavy pressure on its European neighbors, and the depth of its influence depends on the respective countries' strength of resistance.

In later years Russia's expansionism has especially been aimed at Asia. One yellow khan after the other have been clasped to the white czar's compassionate iron breast, and the giant finally could see the ocean – and the ocean is the ocean, even if it does not lie in the westerly direction.

While China lay prostrate in the 1860s after the Opium Wars and the Taiping Rebellion, the Russian diplomats used the occasion to steal the magnificent Amur River valley with its long coastal strip. The Russians have been allowed to keep this bounty, but in reprisal the Chinese government has flooded the district with thousands of colonists – exiled criminals. Russia has not objected to this, since the important thing was to become masters of a coastline where a naval base could be constructed, and down by the border with Korea the Russians have created a "Gibraltar of the East," now known as Vladivostok.

But this great naval base has a very serious defect in that it is completely blocked by ice for a couple of months each winter. Thus the Russian desire for a completely ice-free harbor grows stronger year by year, and this desire leads to their Korean policy, since the Korean coast has more ice-free harbors than they could use. If they could get hold of the whole peninsula – then Russia could dominate East-Asia. Toward this end, Russian agents have infiltrated the length and breadth of the country and made every effort to undermine the Chinese influence.

The Russians have found good collaborators in this underground work in the Japanese and the Americans. These three nations have worked together to increase the disarray in this Eastern Bulgaria year by year as Korea has not had any Stambuloff, who could cut through the intriguants' weave.

Anyone who has lived in East-Asia in the recent years and attentively followed the political movements has understood that the storm would break loose in the near future. We have

only been uncertain as to whether it would come from the north or the east.

Five years ago the conventional wisdom held that the Russians had completed their preparations and would soon go south to plant the double eagle on Deer Island or Point Lazareff. But England's hostile attitude quickly convinced them that sharper weapons than diplomacy would be required in order to gain their objective.

Since that time the Trans-Siberian Railway project has gone forward with astonishing speed, and casual observers have wondered why the Russians were in such a hurry. But a publicized letter from de Giers to Vishnegradsky dated 7 May 1891 provides a little enlightenment.

De Giers cites the minister of war's statement, "that in case of a war with China, it will be difficult to defend the Amur province. According to his opinion, the railway's completion deserves the most serious consideration, since large numbers of Chinese people have begun to settle in the province. The Chinese may not have hostile intentions toward Russia, but one cannot be at all certain that the Chinese government will not get such ideas into their heads later, especially if Russia should come into collision with one of the European naval powers. Eastern Siberia would then be in a very dangerous position, since this province is cut off from re-provisioning in the wintertime. The Chinese have resolved to build a railway through Manchuria, and when this is completed, China may ally itself with England and attack Russia in hope of recovering the Amur province."

We thus see that one of the functions of the Siberian railway is to secure Russia's possession of the Amur province.

But this is only a fraction of its military value. We recall the Pamir question, which was so pressing in 1891. The Russians wanted possession of the high plains in order to come closer to India, but had to retreat – for the time being. When a sideline to the Siberian railway is constructed, the English empire in India will lie exposed. At the same time the first railcars can roll out of St. Petersburg to the Amur province with provisions – but also with war matériel.

The railway will presumably be completed within a few years. When that time comes, the Russians probably intend to move further toward predominance in Asia and as a start solve the Korean question with a military stroke.

We may therefore be confident that it was not with any great joy that the St. Petersburg cabinet received word that their rival in Korea, Japan, had stolen a march on them by declaring war on China 1 August 1894.

As I have stated earlier, everyone who knew the situation were uncertain whether the storm would break from the north or the east. This uncertainty is now resolved, and as Europeans we may perhaps be grateful that it was the Japanese who went first, since a Russian invasion in Korea would have meant the beginning of a World War.

Chapter Eighteen

The difference between the Chinese and Japanese national characters – Kublai Khan's attempt to conquer Japan – The sad fate of the armada – A short-lived peace – The emperor of China gives the *shogun* Ashikaga the title of *Nippon O* – The raids resume – A Chinese Jeanne d'Arc – The Japanese freebooters withdraw northward.

The relations between China and Japan have never been as good as may be desired between so nearly related nations. Their national characters are much too different for that.

Since there as of yet is no historical-scientific exposition in any European language – of either the Korean question or its historical background – I think it might be well to provide a sketch of East-Asia's political history through the centuries. This will help to clarify discernment of future developments, which doubtlessly will have great influence on Europe in many respects.

As I have mentioned before, the Chinese is the world's most peaceful nation, and Japan is perhaps the most warlike in Asia. The clangor of swordplay has always been heavenly music for Japanese ears. The sword was a knight's principal weapon and symbol of noble birth. By the sword the heroes of the island empire won eternal fame. The old gods carried

two-edged swords, and from a dragon's tail the sun goddess forged the sword that she gave Japan's first *mikado*.

Thus it was not to wonder at that the warlike nation would want to try the power of the sword outside of the island empire's boundaries as well.

The nearest land was China, and these *vikings** of the East played the same role on the coasts of this vast empire as the Northmen had on the coasts of France and England. When Kublai Khan and his Mongols had completed their conquest of China in the middle of the 13th century, he also wanted to add the Japanese islands to his possessions. Naturally, the most powerful ruler the world has ever seen could not just passively accept the denizens of the small islands marauding on China's coast. Therefore, as soon as Kublai Khan had completed the organization of his immense new empire, he sent letters to the islands by way of the king of Korea and demanded tribute. However, the emissaries were not even received by the Japanese government and had to return with their mission unsuccessful. Kublai Khan then ordered the Korean king to send 300 ships with 15,000 men to Japan to punish the affront. The fleet lifted anchors in 1274, but the islanders, who were well informed of their enemy's movements, met the Korean ships by the island Tsiusima and inflicted a crushing defeat on the fleet.

The proud Mongol emperor received the news calmly – the pusillanimous Koreans might have let themselves be trounced, but his brave Mongols, who had galloped across

* [Viking is an occupational designation roughly corresponding to pirate/raider; not an ethnic classification. The people were the Norse, or Old Norse.]

Asia and Europe right out the shores of the Baltic Sea would soon break the islanders' defiance, Kublai thought, and sent nine envoys directly to the islands with firm orders not to return until the Japanese government had agreed to make amends for the insults accorded the earlier deputation and pay an annual tribute.

But the freedom-loving Japanese were not frightened by the envoys' threats, quite the contrary. The government resolved to send Kublai Khan a clear and unmistakable message and had the unfortunate delegation executed.

Now the Mongol emperor's patience ended. He swore a frightful oath and immediately gave orders for outfitting a great armada that was to carry 30,000 Mongols and 70,000 Chinese over to Japan. The warlike islanders did not lose courage before it. Volunteers gathered from all corners of the empire to defend their motherland. Scores of war *junks* were built and manned with select crews of the islands' plucky fishermen.

In the meantime the Mongolian-Chinese armada had sailed, but at once met as much misfortune as the Spanish Armada did later. The admiral of the fleet died and had to be replaced with one less competent. The Chinese and the Mongols did not get along and could not agree on orders. In addition, the ocean itself declared against Kublai.

The fleet was struck by a powerful typhoon that split the armada into several parts. Some of the *junks* drifted on shore, others were filled by the towering waves and sank with thousands of warriors.

The rest of the prideful fleet had to seek shelter in the harbors in the northernmost Japanese islands to make repairs.

But they received no respite here. The islanders attacked the ships like raging wolves both from the land and the sea. The situation at last was so desperate that the armada's commanding admiral was forced to surrender. The victors let the Chinese live, but all the Mongols were killed. Only one or two *junks* made their way back to China to tell the ruler of all the lands from the Baltic to the Yellow Sea* about the greatest defeat the Mongols ever suffered.

They were defeated because they attempted a task they were not fit for. Their cavalry was the core of the Mongol army, and the sea was not their element. Nor could the Chinese division of the armada make up for the Mongol lack of naval skills, since, even though the Chinese are skilled sailors, for several reasons they have never succeeded in becoming a sea power. The Japanese on the other hand were in their element, and even Kublai's awesome power could not prevail against their bravery and proficiency at sea.

This was the last attempt that Kublai Khan made at subjugating Japan. He apparently later thought about outfitting yet another expedition, but when his attention was required in other quarters, the project was abandoned.

Kublai Khan's unjustified attack gave the Japanese a good pretext for resuming their destructive activities along China's coasts. One pirate fleet after the other was outfitted in the outer islands and harried the Chinese port cities with fire and sword.

* In Chinese: The Yellow Sea – *Huang Hai*. The Yellow River – *Huang Ho*.

In order to defend themselves against their cruel tormentors, the Chinese built a number of fortifications at the most exposed locations and established a standing coastal defense force, but it did not help much, since just the sight of the Japanese pirate *junks* often was enough to drive the coast guard to flight.

The pirate raids finally came to a sudden stop in 1402. The then *shogun*, or leader of the Japanese knighthood, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, was possessed by an enormous ego, but as he did not dare unseat his nominal sovereign, the *mikado*, from the throne, the *shogun* sought to strengthen his position in another way. He sent a deputation to China with rich presents and voluntarily offered the emperor the hegemony that Kublai Khan's proud warriors had not been able to gain by force.

Ashikaga's emissary was of course greeted with jubilation and for his return received a document signed by the emperor that for all time granted for Ashikaga and his successors the title *Nippon O*, or "King of Japan," a title that was borne by the *mikado*'s over-mighty vassal right up to 1868, when the *shogunate* was abolished and the *mikado* recovered his rightful powers.

The Japanese historians have never forgotten Ashikaga Yoshimitsu's shameful behavior. He is pointed out in history for scorn and reproof as the only Japanese *who has betrayed the motherland's holy interests for a foreign ruler's favor*.

There was peace between the countries as long as the first *Nippon O* lived. In that time a lively commerce grew up between China and Japan, but the national antipathy between the people seems to have been too strong for this peaceful

association to last. A dispute between a pair of Japanese and Chinese merchants was enough to light the fires of war again.

Since the Japanese did not feel strong enough to engage in open warfare, they continued with their pirate raids.

One of the most dreadful attacks occurred around 1530. Several freebooter bands had then come together and joined in a combined assault on the provinces Chekiang and Kiangsu. The Japanese marched far inland robbing and laying waste to the country and occupied several large cities, including Shanghai. Apparently they were driven off after a couple of years, but only to practice their bloody trade in other places.

A Chinese Jeanne d'Arc, whose name is immortalized in innumerable novels and songs, emerged during this feud. Her name was Hwa-ki, and she ruled over a small semi-independent state in southern China. She is said to have possessed Boadicea's abilities with Clorinda's beauty, and her name was known far and wide across China.

The thought of all the pain and misery that the Japanese freebooter hordes caused filled her with a fiery patriotic sentiment. She set her little state's affairs in order, turned her young son over to her advisers' care, and gathered a select band of warriors with which she offered the emperor to drive out the Japanese invaders.

By then it was no longer Kublai Khan and his fierce Mongols who were in charge of defending the peaceful Chinese from their enemies' wrath. China again had a native dynasty with a peaceful man on the dragon throne. *But peacefulness is only a virtue under certain circumstances*, and here it surely would have been more fitting for China's

mighty ruler to lead his men into battle himself rather than leave it to a woman to carry out this duty.

Anyway, the emperor happily accepted Hwa-ki's offer, and the *langping*, or the wolf soldiers, as she called her little army, soon became a horror for the foreign raiders, since every one that she caught was executed. The Japanese had already reached Nanking and begun a siege when the heroine arrived. She soon caused them to abandon this project, and under bloody attacks the freebooters had to withdraw to their ships. They then sailed north to the coast of Korea – and up there in the north they soon had occasion to use their swords for a larger purpose than pillaging defenseless coastal towns.

Chapter Nineteen

An old legend about Korea – Empress Jingu's war – "The crowned monkey" will conquer China – A half million Japanese invade Korea – The Chinese come to the rescue – Shifting fortunes – Hideyoshi dies and the army returns – The ear grave in Koto.

There once was a ruler of Kao-kiu-li who had captured the daughter of the Yellow River's spirit and held her captive in his palace.

But when the Sun God one day saw the lovely princess, he was overcome by an ardent passion and drenched her with his rays, which caused her to become with child and give birth to a beautiful little prince.

When the child grew up, it was named Chu Mo-ni, which means "Great Archer." One day, when the ruler of Kao-kiu-li was out hunting with his foster son, he allowed him to shoot an arrow against a tiger that was lurking in the bushes. Chu Mo-ni at once raised his little bow, let fly, and the arrow pierced the man-eater's heart.

The ruler of Kao-kiu-li became envious of this and secretly thought that it might be best to do away with the little prince, less he later should get any ideas about removing the ruler from the throne as revenge for imprisoning his mother.

When Chu Mo-ni became aware that the ruler meant him harm, he secretly fled the palace and set out on foot. After some days of wandering, he came to a river that was impossible to cross over. The prince could already hear the hoof beats of his pursuers' horses in the distance and sadly sat down by the river's shore and sighed: "How sad it is that I, who am son of the sun and Huang Ho's daughter, shall die because this river thwarts my escape!"

But the youngster had hardly uttered these words before all the fish in the river swam up from the depths and formed a living bridge so that he could safely pass over the river.

When the prince had come across to the other bank, he met three venerable old men, who smilingly bid him welcome. One was dressed in coarse hemp cloth, one in an embroidered silk gown, and the third only covered his body with a rush blanket.

The men led the prince to the nearest city, called Ki-chinkow, of which he later became ruler. From here he conducted several campaigns of conquest and founded the kingdom of *Kao-li*^{*}.

This is one of the old legends of Korea's earliest history. Like most myths it seems rather meaningless.

But in this old legend about the Koreans being descended from the spirit of the Yellow River there may be support for the claim that Korea once was a part of the Chihli province, and that the Yellow Sea in the course of the centuries has intruded farther and farther in over the lowlands and separated them.

* The Europeans garbled this to "Korea."

An old Chinese work also states that the king of Korea lived in a city near Tientsin.

Korea from ancient times has been the medium by which the Japanese islands became acquainted with civilized ideas.

The Chinese culture was transplanted through Korea, and through Korea Buddha's gentle philosophy flowed out to the wild pirates and united them in an orderly society.

In return, well, in return the Koreans have been taught the same lesson as the Greeks from the Romans after Greek culture had laid a solid foundation for the future Roman state – the supremacy of the sword.

According to Japanese historians, the first campaign against Korea took place ca. 200 A.D. At that time the conquerors had already established themselves on the southwestern part of the Japanese archipelago and forced the indigenous Aino people to move farther north.

The then ruling *mikado*'s consort's name was Jingu. She was as famous for her courage as for her beauty, piety, and intelligence. On one of the campaigns against the indigenous people, a god appeared before her and asked: "Why do you fight so hard to conquer these poor lands? There is a much larger and richer land to the west. It shines with gold and silver, and there you may gain undreamed of treasure. Worship me, and I will give you the power to conquer this country without spilling blood."

When Jingu told her husband about her meeting with the god, he refused to believe it and told her he had been up on the highest mountain and had looked everywhere, but his eyes had only seen the ocean. Did her country perhaps lie in the clouds?

The god then told the *mikado* through the inspired Jingu: "Because you have doubted my word, you will not go there, but your wife has conceived, and the child she is carrying shall conquer the country."

The *mikado* died shortly thereafter, and the devout Jingu immediately began preparations for a campaign against the country to the west – Korea. But first she wished to receive a sign that it was the will of Heaven. For that purpose she dipped her long black hair in water and thought; "If the hair is dry when I pull it up again, it is the sign that the gods will support my endeavor."

And it was as she wished; not a drop of water had attached to her hair.

Now Jingu was confident in her mission. She immediately ordered her men to make their ships ready to sail and said: "Our country's security or destruction depends on the outcome of this campaign. I leave the details to you. I am but a young woman, but I will disguise myself as a man and lead you, since I have faith in the gods and my soldiers. We will conquer a rich land. The honor will be yours, if we succeed. The dishonor mine, if we fail."

Fired up with enthusiasm, all the chieftains swore to serve her with all their might.

But this campaign was a difficult task for the Japanese of that day, and the preparations went forward rather slowly. Jingu then again sought help from the gods. She built a magnificent temple for them and made offerings while praying for their help. Then it went faster, and in 201 A.D. everything was ready.

Before the departure Jingu told her men: "No plundering. Do not disdain a weak enemy, nor fear a strong one. Show mercy to those who surrender, but kill those who resist. The brave shall be rewarded and cowards punished."

The gods cried from above: "The spirit of peace shall follow you, Jingu, and protect your life. The spirit of war will go before you and show your ships the way."

Just as they were about to raise anchor, the valiant lady felt that she was about to give birth, and that would delay the implementation of her proud dream. But then the friendly gods again came to her assistance and told her that if she sewed a certain jewel into her belt, the future prince would not be born until she returned from Korea.

Jingu did as the gods had advised, and the fleet departed for Korea.

After a very fortunate passage these East-Asian *vikings* landed in southern Korea. The king in that part of the country heard about the arrival of the strangers from the fishermen and fearfully exclaimed: "We never knew there were people on the other side of the ocean! Have the gods deserted us?"

But the gods had told Jingu Korea would be conquered without spilling blood, and that is also what happened. The Koreans came down to the shore and indicated to the strangers that they were willing to surrender. Peace was immediately established on condition that the inhabitants would acknowledge Japan's suzerainty and surrender to the Japanese several sons of leading chieftains as security for their good faith. In addition the king had to give them eighty *junks* loaded with gold, silk, and other valuable objects.

Jingu and her warriors were well satisfied with this and made the Koreans swear that they would never give the Japanese grounds for sending another fleet across the sea *until the rivers' waters should flow upstream.*

The fleet sailed back to Japan after a couple of months stay in Korea. On their arrival back home, Jingu gave birth to a son, who, according to popular opinion, had been the essential element in the campaign's fortunate outcome. There are still numerous temples honoring both in Japan, and no doubt the devout have during the war with China sent thousands of prayers to Jingu's son, who was elevated to become the god of war after his death.

This first invasion on foreign soil is always described with pride in Japanese history, but since no accounts of Jingu's invasion of Korea are found in ancient Chinese historical works, I assume that a core of truth has been embellished by fanciful legend. The "conquest" of Korea in 203 A.D. probably had more in common with the Norse *viking* raids on foreign coasts.

*

*

*

1390 years after Jingu's invasion, a Japanese army and fleet was again headed for the coast of Korea. This time it was not just about conquering Korea, but – the conquest of the entire Chinese empire.

Who had proposed this insane design? It was Hideyoshi* – a man who had risen from simple soldier to become Japan's *shogun*, a man whose appearance gave his enemies occasion to call him "the crowned monkey."

When Hideyoshi had secured his position after a bloody civil war, he did all that he could to replenish Japan's exhausted economic resources. Navigable rivers were dredged, a number of canals were dug, and hundreds of bridges still testify to his activity.

Hideyoshi's rule was very popular among the common people from whence he had sprung, and it may be that it was on this popularity the *shogun* based his grand plan. It could not succeed unless the whole nation joined in wholeheartedly.

A look at the map of Asia might cause us to smile ironically at Hideyoshi's foolhardy scheme, but since we have heard what a handful of freebooters had earlier achieved on the coast of China, this preposterous reaction is partly dispelled. And a couple of centuries earlier, Kublai Khan and his Mongols had conquered China. Why could not the Japanese do the same? As warriors, they hardly stood second to any nation in Asia.

History also seems to show that the Chinese race usually has not worried much about the national origin of their ruling house. As long as the rulers governed according to China's ancient customs and traditions and let everyone keep their inherited freedoms, the Chinese masses have been content.

In Hideyoshi's time the country also was torn by domestic unrest brought about by the incompetence of the last Ming

* Better known to Europeans under the name *Taiko Sama*. See more in "From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain."

emperors. There was thus much to point to that the plan might succeed.

In the hope that the Koreans would join with the Japanese army, Hideyoshi wrote the following letter to the king of Korea:

"I will gather a large army and attack the Ming Empire, but if the plan is to succeed, your people must join with mine. My friendship depends mainly on the assistance offered my soldiers during the campaign."

The *shogun* then gathered his principal vassals. He promised to march straight to Peking and presented his campaign plan in as rose-colored light as possible. All agreed that the opportunity offered by this favorable moment in time must be grasped, and to make them even more enthusiastic about the campaign, he laid a map of China on the table and divided the country between them in advance.

One of the knights proposed that a couple of hundred Chinese interpreters should be acquired to follow with the army, but Hideyoshi just laughed and said: "We will soon teach the Chinese to speak our language."

The *shogun* had intended to lead the campaign in person, but he fell ill during the preparations for war and had to turn the command over his friend Kato Kiyomasa, who later became famous as a bitter persecutor of Christians. His second in command was Konishi Yukinaga, an ardent Christian and protector of the Catholic missionaries.*

* St. Francis Xavier and another Jesuit landed in Japan in 1549. The first European to visit the islands was the Portuguese pirate and slave trader Mendes Pinto in 1542.

According to *Guat Shi*, the Japanese history of war, the army consisted of 500,000 men. It does not seem probable that the Japanese in those days could present an army of that size, but I will let it stand and charge it to the Japanese historians' account.

When all was ready, the proud fleet departed to the sound of thundering cannon and the people's exuberant jubilation. Hideyoshi had tried to buy a couple of Portuguese pirate ships, but in vain, since the captains of these thought it more profitable to continue to practice their trade in East-Asian waters than to sell out. The fleet therefore consisted entirely of large *junks*.

The ships were delayed by stormy weather by the island of Iki a while, and when the weather cleared, Konishi, who was better acquainted with the waters, parted from the main fleet and steered into the port of Fusan on Korea's southern coast. Here, several pirate crews who had their lair in the port joined up with him, and, without allowing his troops any time to rest, he marched off to win victories before the main force arrived.

Three days later, Kato also made landfall in Fusan, and when he heard that Konishi already had left, he became very angry and exclaimed: "I will not follow in the tracks of the boy!"

To give expression to his anger, he ordered Fusan to be destroyed – a curious way to gain the goodwill of the Korean people, but Kato may have considered that to be impossible anyway, considering the misdeeds his countrymen earlier had committed on Korean soil.

It also soon became clear that the natives had no intention of joining with the invaders; quite the contrary, but the undisciplined hordes that the Korean king could deploy against the well-organized islanders scattered as chaff before the wind. The capital soon was in the enemy's hands, and the king was obliged to save himself by fleeing. He made it safely to China and requested assistance from his liege lord, the emperor.

The government was immediately willing to assist the fugitive monarch drive the accursed Japanese away from the Asian mainland, but since the Chinese armies usually consisted of hired mercenaries, it took a long time before a sufficient force was gathered together.

Not until a year after the Japanese landed did a Chinese army move into Korea. The Japanese had then subjugated the entire country as far as up to the city of Pingyang. Here the armies met. An indecisive battle was fought outside the city walls followed by a short ceasefire. Peace feelers were extended from both camps, but without results. The Chinese and Japanese both brought in reinforcements, and another battle was fought at Pingyang.* This time the Japanese had to yield and withdraw to Seoul.

The next year the Chinese succeeded in driving the Japanese farther and farther south, so that the Japanese finally only had Fusan left. The Chinese government then again tried to initiate peace negotiations. Among other things, Hideyoshi was offered the same title of *Nippon O* that the Chinese emperor earlier had bestowed on Ashikaga Yoshimitsu in

* The Japanese won a major victory over the Chinese at the same place 15 September 1894 – exactly 300 years later.

addition to many costly presents and a large sum of money to be distributed among the senior generals. But Hideyoshi did not wish to sully his great name by accepting titles and favors from foreign monarchs. He demanded all of Korea and sent another army across to the peninsula on 200 *junks* to give emphasis to his demands. The war resumed, and fortune returned to the Japanese when disagreements between the Chinese generals hindered joint operations. But soon afterward Kato Kiyomasa received notice that Hideyoshi had died in Kyoto. All plans for conquest then collapsed, and the army was ordered to return home.*

In 1598 Kato and Konishi sailed across the Korean Strait again – but not as viceroys of Chinese provinces. All that they had won in these frightful years were some *junks* loaded with stolen treasure. Thus ended Hideyoshis's proud plan. Rather than conquering an empire his great idea had shrunk to become only a plundering raid on the peaceful Korean nation.

The Japanese attack cannot be justified in any way. The historians also deduct a lot from the great *shogun's* credit account for this immoral enterprise. Japan was impoverished by the colossal costs of the war, while its bellicose sons laid thousands of happy Korean homes in ashes. The Japanese warriors cut the Koreans down like cattle, while large numbers of their countrymen who did not fight in the war, had to sell themselves to Spanish and Portuguese slave traders in order to get bread for their starving families – and all for a single man's dreams of grandeur.

* Some Japanese were allowed to remain in Fusan. They established a colony here, which has maintained itself up to now.



The ear grave in Kyoto

During my visit to Kyoto in the fall of 1892 I passed a monument that my guide asked me to stop by for a moment. Most people would assume some famous general rested under this, but no — *ears* rest under this. Thousands of human ears brought from Korea's peaceful peninsula by Hideyoshi's warriors.

According to the old Japanese tradition, a victorious general would bring the heads of the vanquished home with him, but since it would be impractical to bring several shiploads of that kind, they cut the ears off the dead Koreans, and these were preserved and brought to Kyoto when the victorious army returned. They were later buried in a grave and the monument constructed over it as a memorial of the campaign.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

Chapter Twenty

Japan annexes Liu-Kiu – The Koreans challenge the Japanese – The incursion on Formosa – Japanese intrigues in Korea – The Japanese legation is sent packing – Li Hung-chang appoints the German Count von Möllendorf as the king of Korea's adviser – The rebellion in 1884 – Political disturbances in Japan – The sorry condition of the Korean people.

From what I have related so far, we see that conflict between the Japanese and their neighbors is not a particularly new occurrence in the history of East-Asia.

The cause of the last war was not only the Korean question. The fight over Korea only exacerbated the hostile sentiment that had fermented between the parties since 1868, when the Japanese government without further ado took possession of the kingdom of Liu-Kiu.

When we look at the map, we notice a row of small islands that stretch in a bow from the south end of Japan down toward the island of Formosa. This group of islands had for centuries comprised a separate kingdom under both Chinese and Japanese protection. The inhabitants called China their "mother" and Japan their "father." Tribute was sent to both Peking and Tokyo. Both empires thus considered the islands as their vassal state.

In the 16th century the emperor of China gave the king a silver seal and at the same time gave his island kingdom a new name that translates as "The Hanging Pearls" – meaning that the islands could be seen as row of pearls on the Chinese imperial gown.

But a few years later the Japanese Prince of Satsuma came to the islands with an army and forced the king to acknowledge him as his suzerain. However, we find later that the old relationships with China and Japan were re-established.*

Then, in 1868, the Japanese put an end to the ambiguous position of the islands by pensioning off the king and declaring Liu-Kiu the same as any other Japanese district.

This was not at all according to the islanders' wishes, and they continued to send tribute to Peking and begging for help. However, the results have only been somewhat sharp diplomatic exchanges, which have continued right up to last year.

The Korean question came to the fore shortly after Liu-Kiu was incorporated into the Japanese empire.

The inhabitants of the peninsula had lived peacefully with their warlike neighbors for a long time, but when the waves of the social revolution began to drown the Chinese civilization in Japan, the friendly relationships ended. The conservative Koreans became enraged over the Japanese abandoning their old Turanian ideals and turning their eyes to the West. In anything but flattering terms they derided the

* The princes of Satsuma have often played a significant role in Japanese politics. At the revolution in 1868, the family held 1/8 of the empire's lands.

Japanese for their slavish fawning before the foreign barbarians and ended with declaring war on Japan.

This challenge from as puny a nation as Korea caused great astonishment and indignation in the islands, where they had just begun to calm down a little after the turbulent revolution. The war spirit heated up into flame, and the whole army cried: "To Korea! To Korea!"

But the government was determined to resist the cries for war, since solving domestic social questions was deemed more important. In order to give some outlet for the martial sentiment, it was decided to send an army and a fleet down to — *Formosa*.

The interior of this island was inhabited by several wild tribes that had always been a terror for the Chinese coastal population. A *junk* from Liu-Kiu went aground on the east coast, and the wild tribes streamed down to the coast and killed the whole crew. A Japanese vessel suffered the same fate.

Since the Chinese government did not take any steps toward punishing these wild people, Japan sent an envoy to Peking to demand permission to go after the islanders themselves and give them a serious chastisement.

This was granted on certain conditions, and a small army was sent across. Fortifications were built and several roads constructed from the coast into the interior to the hiding places of the wild tribes. This was successful. The marauders had to promise to behave, and a hitherto unknown peace and quiet soon ruled over all of Formosa.

But then the Japanese did not want to go back home again; they felt the fertile island with its rich mineral deposits

was just right for them. This finally caused the government in Peking to wake up, and the Japanese government was warned that its troops must be removed forthwith. But the Japanese did not feel like complying with this order – at least not without a substantial compensation, since the expedition had cost them over 5 million dollars.

Irritated over Liu-Kiu as well as the Formosa affair, the Chinese threatened their bothersome neighbors with war, and as the Japanese were not prepared for this eventuality at the moment, the Tokyo government gave its envoy in Peking instructions to resolve the Formosa question peaceably, and, as unbelievable as it sounds, the Chinese government agreed to pay Japan ¾ million dollars to peacefully leave Formosa!

To love peace is considered a virtue. We Europeans probably would have found that China's honor required a less forbearing conduct, but fortunately for the Chinese nation the governing circles there have other notions about the demands of honor than their European colleagues. They may well have thought: "If we have to send a fleet with an army over to Formosa to drive the Japanese away, it will cost at least twice as much. It is best to arrange the matter peaceably, and many lives will be saved. Peace at any cost."

The tense relations between Japan and Korea also were peaceably resolved this time. The Japanese were wise enough to realize that even the most peace loving nation could be goaded beyond endurance. Invading Korea would oblige the Chinese to go to war, and therefore the Japanese chose to take the high road. Rather than answer back to the Koreans' challenge and rude language, they chose to initiate negotiations with the Korean government to conclude a treaty

of friendship and commercial relations. The tactful and resolute performance of the Japanese government on this occasion deserves our sincere admiration.

Their peaceful efforts also were successful. The first treaty between Korea and Japan was signed in 1876 – with the assent of the Chinese government. An embassy was established in Seoul and Hanabusa, one of the young Japan's most promising men, was appointed as ambassador.

With his energy the Japanese began to win more and more influence on the peninsula, but this influence was regrettably misused much too often. Their behavior soon came to resemble – that which the Europeans had exhibited in their own country a few years ago.

The result was that a very strong anti-Japanese party was formed, even within liberal circles, where Western culture otherwise was viewed favorably.

The young king, Li Hui*, who ascended the throne in 1873, had surrounded himself with liberal ministers, mainly consisting of his talented queen's relatives. But when the liberal party split over the Japanese arrogant behavior, the conservatives won more and more ground, and they found an able leader in the king's father. As regent for his underage son he had managed to fight off both a French attack in 1866 and an American in 1871. He therefore also considered himself called to chase the Japanese away.

The tension between the king's and the ex-regent's parties increased day by day, and when the king concluded friendship treaties with the "barbarians" in 1882, there was a bloody riot in Seoul on the 23^d of July. The citizens, most of whom

* His Majesty Li Hui is a nephew of his predecessor on the throne.

were opposed to the king's foreign-friendly policies, attacked the palace, and several high officials were killed.

The mob then attacked the Japanese embassy. The legation's members and servants held out for some time, but when the building was set on fire they had to fight their way out through the enraged mob. In close order the pursued staff managed to make their way down to the coast and take refuge aboard an English warship with a loss of 16 men.

As soon as reports of this regrettable episode reached Tokyo, orders were given to prepare for war, and a month later Hanabusa returned to Seoul with an escort of 500 men. The ex-regent, who now was in power, crawled to the cross and begged for peace. This was acceded to contingent on payment of a large indemnity and granting the Japanese colonials many special rights and privileges. A new trade compact was signed, and a Korean embassy established in Tokyo.

Of course, China could not ignore Japan's increasing influence in Korea. As long as the Japanese stayed out of the mainland, the Chinese had tolerated their aggressive behavior, but when they now had established themselves in Korea, the government in Peking thought it best to give their neighbors a warning. The king had complained to his liege lord, the emperor, about the tyrannical behavior of his father, the ex-regent, and the result was that a Chinese army was sent over to Korea. The king got his powers back, and the ex-regent was taken to China as a prisoner of the state. However, he was released after half a year's mild detention, when his son pleaded on his behalf.

In hope of preventing future disturbances and to keep an eye on the Japanese, the Chinese foreign minister, Li Hung-chang, gave the imperial commisioner a guard of several hundred men and appointed his friend, the German von Möllendorf, as the king's counselor for all matters of foreign policy. These precautions were not sufficient. The Japan-friendly part of the liberal progress party looked askance at the new arrangement and immediately began intriguing against the Chinese. In that they got assistance from several quarters – not least from the Japanese legation. One of the European envoys may perhaps also have played a not insignificant role in the plot, but I will not call him by name here, though I have it from a trusted source.

Late in the evening of the 4th of December 1884, a group of armed men moved warily through Seoul's dark streets to the royal residence led by a Korean intrigant named Kim Ok Kiun. The surprised guard did not offer resistance and the conspirators broke into His Majesty's apartments and demanded that he put himself under Japan's protection. The king replied with a firm no and secretly ordered one of his supporters to advise the Chinese general, who was camped a little outside the city, about what was happening.

But the messenger did not get far. He was discovered by the plotters' rearguard leaving the palace and immediately cut down. Von Möllendorf's family, who lived nearby, was intended to suffer the same fate. But they were warned in time and dressed in Korean clothes succeeded in escaping before the murderers arrived.



Tai Wen Kun
The king of Korea's father. Born 1811.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

Later in the night Kim Ok Kuin let the king's ministers be called to the palace under pretense of it being the king's orders, and as they stepped into the audience hall they were literally hacked to pieces by some Koreans who had received military education in Japan. Kim Ok Kuin then forced the king to sign a document that appointed the dictator's friends to replace the murdered ministers.

At dawn the Japanese ambassador's guard marched up before the castle to "protect" the king, whom the rebels threatened to dethrone. The revolution seemed to be a *fait accompli*, but unfortunately the people were not in sympathy with Kim Ok Kuin's arrangements. The Chinese general got news of the coup in the afternoon and, after conferring with the imperial commissioner, Yuan, he moved into the city and demanded an audience with His Majesty. When this was refused, the general ordered his troops to fire on the rebels, and after a short resistance the Chinese forced their way into the palace and freed the king. The citizens of the capital, who strongly suspected the Japanese of being behind the whole affair, took the side of the Chinese, and attacked the Japanese embassy for the second time. As in 1882, it was burned to the ground, and the ambassador and his guard put to flight after a brisk defensive action that cost the lives of 150 Koreans, 30 Chinese, and 39 Japanese. Again, as before, the fugitives headed for Seoul's port city, Chemulpo. Here the Japanese steamship "*Chitose Maru*" lay at anchor, and they sailed over to Japan on her. Among the passengers were also Kim Ok Kuin and three of the dictator's "cabinet." The others had been caught by the enraged Koreans and executed at the same place where the king's ministers had been murdered.

Kim Ok Kuin, to whom I will return later, has received a much variegated assessment among East-Asia's politicians. In his youth he spent a lot of time in Japan and was very interested in all the new reforms carried out in the island empire. On his return to Korea, Kim Ok Kuin won the king's personal confidence and was appointed assistant secretary in the foreign ministry. He was regarded as extraordinarily friendly to the foreigners and used his influence to try to get the king and many leading men to follow Japan's example, but he had only slight success in this.

While in exile he has expressed his regrets over the murder of the seven ministers, but defended this crime with that he only had the choice between doing away with them or himself suffer the same fate.

If the coup had succeeded, Kim Ok Kiun would have declared Korea independent and got Japan to establish a sort of protectorate over the peninsula.

The conspirator's good intentions were also appreciated by the Japanese government. He was granted an annual pension, and despite several requests for his surrender from Peking and Seoul, he found a secure refuge at the court in Tokyo.

A war between Japan and Korea would seem to be inevitable after this affair, and the clamor over in the island empire would probably have caused a less strong government to yield to the bellicose sentiment, but the cabinet in Tokyo understood that, after China's energetic response in 1882, an attack on Korea would mean war with China, and the country was not yet ready for that. The army and the navy would both need to be brought up to a quite different level before there

could be any hope of an advantageous solution to the Korean question. The Japanese government therefore contented itself with threatening language while at the same time indicating it was willing to negotiate.

The hint was taken, and after a conference between the Chinese, Korean, and Japanese representatives it was agreed that the king would apologize to the emperor of Japan, have the embassy re-built with barracks for the legation's guard, and pay 110,000 dollars to the families of the dead.

Von Möllendorf, who as the king's advisor and inspector general of the customs service had sought to work against the Japanese influence, was also removed from his post with significant assistance from the aforementioned European envoy, *who in his country's interest ought to have done all he could to support him.*

As a pretext for his removal it was claimed that he had lent a much too willing ear to certain proposals from the Russian ambassador, which I, being personally acquainted with von Möllendorf, consider a ridiculous falsehood.

Von Möllendorf's removal occasioned a very important change in Korea's domestic governance as the management of the customs service was placed under the Chinese inspector general – a political chess move by Li Hung-chang, who thereby hoped to bind the vassal state closer to the Chinese empire.

By the king's personal wish, Li also appointed another foreigner to manage Korea's foreign affairs. This was the American, Mr. Owen N. Denny. This gentleman has probably been a great disappointment to his powerful protector, since

all his efforts have been directed at minimizing China's influence over Korea.

Thus, the Japanese did not consider themselves strong enough to engage in a war with China over Korea in 1884, *nor would the Tokyo government have thrown down the gauntlet to its mighty neighbor in 1894 if domestic concerns had not forced the issue.*

The new constitution, which went into effect with the opening of the first parliament 28 November 1890, had caused much tension between the government and the people's elected representatives. One vote of no confidence followed the other, but since the parliamentary system still is not fully understood and accepted, it has just resulted in new elections, which have been conducted under rather agitated conditions. *If the government could not get the nation's attention turned away from the domestic politics, a popular uprising might have forced it to resign.**

The situation in Korea became the government's salvation.

After the attempted coup in 1884, the king of Korea surrounded himself with a cabinet of the same color as before. The regained power was not employed with the wisdom and justice that a government's actions ought to be based on, and the king was much too weak to oppose the

* See more about the Japanese constitution in "From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain."

wishes of the queen and his advisors. As before, all official posts were given to friends and relatives who only thought to enrich themselves at the people's expense.

Korea has an inherited nobility class that considers itself entitled to official appointments instead of as in China having to compete with the sons of the simplest citizens. This has made the Koreans into the lazy, apathetic nation that it now is.

Chapter Twenty-one

Kim Ok Kuin is lured over to Shanghai and is murdered in a hotel – Assassination attempt in Tokyo on one of the conspirator's minions – The Korean ambassador goes home without taking leave of the emperor.

From his exile in Japan, Kim Ok Kuin kept himself well up to date with developments on the peninsula and blew on the embers of the glowing discontent as best he could. He never tired of intriguing against his king and the Chinese government. Korea's ambassador in Tokyo was well aware of this, and since the Japanese government refused to turn the conspirator over, several attempts were made to put him away. The Korean government seemed not to feel safe as long as he was alive.

A noble named Hong-Tjyong-Ou finally came up with a plan that accomplished the goal.

This gentleman was related to one of Kim Ok Kiun's top henchmen in 1884. When the coup miscarried, several members of Hong's family were executed as co-conspirators.

In order to ward off suspicion, which had also fallen on him, and to avenge the misfortune that the conspirator had brought to the family, Hong-Tjyong-Ou offered to carry out the death sentence that the king had pronounced over Kim Ok Kuin in exile. By pre-arrangement with the government, his

properties were "confiscated" and Hong-Tjyong-Ou "escaped" over to Japan, where he soon found occasion to win the conspirator's confidence.

Time after time Kim Ok Kuin's new friend suggested that Kim should go over to Korea and attempt to raise the banner of revolt again, but in vain. Kim did not think the prospects looked favorable, and Hong therefore left Japan and traveled to Europe to study at the Korean government's expense.

He stayed in Paris after 1890 and won some attention in the diplomatic and literary world by his courteous and polished manners. His daily circle of acquaintances included among others the renowned Père Hyacinthe, with whom he formed a warm friendship.

In July 1893 Hong-Tjyong-Ou received orders to go to Japan again and make another attempt to lure Kim Ok Kuin to Korea or China. On his arrival in Tokyo, he at once sought out his old "friend. The conspirator now seemed more inclined to listen to his fellow Korean's proposal of making a new attempt at a revolution. It is possible that Kim Ok Kuin had received encouraging reports from his secret friends over on the peninsula. Nor is it far-fetched to think the politicians in Tokyo may have given him to understand that Japan would support such an attempt in hope of getting to fish in muddy waters.

But enough speculation. Hong-Tjyong-Ou finally got the old fox to step into a trap he had set for him. In order to avoid attracting attention it was decided to first travel to Shanghai and from there sail over to Fusan or some other port in southern Korea when their friends on the peninsula gave the signal.



Kim Ok Kuin

It is rather odd that a so cunning a diplomat as Kim Ok Kuin could entertain such a proposal. He had to have known that the Chinese authorities would arrest him as soon as his presence in Shanghai became known. But this possibility seems to have been disregarded due to a forged invitation that the conspirator is said to have received from Li Ching-fang*, who had earlier been ambassador in Tokyo and had treated Kim Ok Kuin in a most friendly way. This also explains why the two Koreans were accompanied to Shanghai by a translator from the Chinese embassy.

* Li Ching-fang is Li Hung-chang's adoptive son and one of China's most promising young men.

On arrival in Shanghai they took rooms in a Japanese hotel. Kim Ok Kuin and Hong-Tjyong-Ou both wore European dress and were thought to be Japanese.

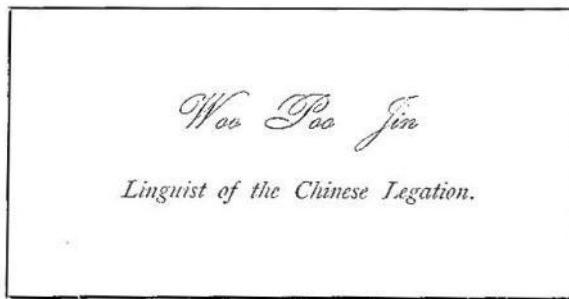
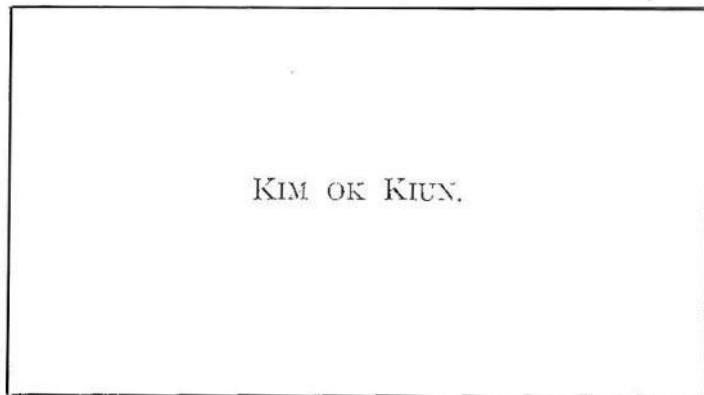
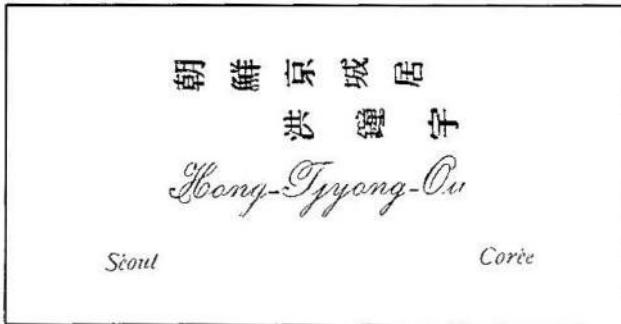
On the 28th of March, while the Chinese translator was out in the city, Hong-Tjyong-Ou went into his traveling companion's room and fired a couple of pistol shots at Kim Ok Kuin, who was resting on a sofa. The victim tried to get out of the room, but one more shot laid him out on the floor.

When the deed was done, the murderer dressed in Korean clothes, which he had brought with him, and slipped out of the hotel before the hotel staff could gather their senses to stop him.

A more dramatic end to a remarkable career can hardly be imagined. For nine years Kim Ok Kuin had avoided his king's retribution, but then he is shot down like a dog in a Japanese hotel on Chinese territory by a fellow Korean, who pretends to be an ardent sympathizer of him and his high-flying plans.

The conspirator's death certainly was welcomed by all sides. Even the Japanese government at first seemed to be taking the news with equanimity. Perhaps he knew way too much about Japanese double-dealing on the Korean peninsula. It was also suggested that the light-footed diplomat had made contact with the Russian ambassador in order to have a reserve option if the Japanese government did not find it opportune to help him.

The murderer was found by the European police after a few days and arrested. Under interrogation he immediately admitted that he had orders from his king to kill Kim Ok Kuin, whom he considered to be his homeland's greatest enemy. Hong-Tjyong-Ou was then turned over to the Chinese



Facsimiles of visitors' cards found in the murdered man's valise.

authorities, who telegraphed to Li Hung-chang and requested further orders. Meanwhile a high-ranking Korean official came to the *taotai* of Shanghai and demanded that the murderer be released to him. This was consented to after the *taotai* received instructions from Tientsin. At the same time the captain on the Chinese gunboat "*Wei-Ching*" was ordered to transport Hong-Tjyong-Ou and Kim Ok Kuin's corpse over to Korea.

On arrival in Seoul the murderer immediately got an audience with the king and received His Majesty's recognition for a well-executed mission. The corpse of a person guilty of high treason is to be cut into pieces according to Korean law, and this was done to Kim Ok Kuin. According to reports, a piece was sent to each of the peninsula's eight provinces.

On the same day as Kim Ok Kuin was shot in Shanghai, one of his cohorts in 1884 nearly met the same fate in Tokyo. The assassination failed, and the perpetrators took refuge in the Korean embassy. The Japanese government demanded that they be handed over, since the crime occurred on Japanese territory, but the ambassador resolutely refused to comply. The assassination attempt presumably had been made with his knowledge and sanction in accordance with the Korean king's orders. In any case, the perpetrators, like Hong-Tjyong-Ou in Shanghai insisted later under interrogation that they were only working on behalf of the Korean government. Since the Japanese despite repeated requests had refused to turn over the condemned insurrectionaries, the king of Korea considered it necessary to remove them by subterfuge. As long as they were alive, he might expect a repetition of the dramatic events in 1884 at any time.

But the government in Tokyo decided that it was time to put a stop to these political murders, since the whole country was in an uproar stirred up by Kim Ok Kuin's and his co-conspirators' friends. The Korean ambassador was given three days to think about it, and since he saw that the culprits otherwise would be taken by force, he let them be brought outside the embassy grounds, where they were immediately arrested by the police. But the next night the ambassador secretly left Tokyo without taking his leave from the emperor. In an official document, he complained about the violation of the embassy's extraterritoriality, which he gave as reason for his unusual action.

Chapter Twenty-two

An excellent pretext for incitement – Revolt in southern Korea – The revolutionaries' proclamation – The king begs the Chinese emperor for assistance – Chinese troops land at Asan – Japan drops the mask – Deliberations in Peking – The dowager empress.

These events provided an excellent pretext for incitement to war for the Japanese who wanted a break with Korea and China. A majority of the newspapers wrote that the time had now come to revenge the diplomatic defeat that Japan had suffered in 1884. But "*Japan Mail*," which is regarded as very close to the government, still felt that there was not sufficient reason to embark on an invasion. However, the situation on the peninsula would soon give the government a suitable pretext.

Shortly after Kim Ok Kuin's murder, the revolt that his friends presumably had had a strong premonition about began. It was the so-called *Togaku-to*, who now dug up the battle axe – not so unthinkably with the Japanese government's knowledge and approval, since there were a number of islanders in the revolutionary ranks.

Togaku-to is a large ultra-conservative party in Korea, that holds to the old ways and traditions with the utmost tenacity. The cause of the uprising was as usual the rapacious and unjust behavior of the officials. The uprising began in the southern province of Chulla and soon reached alarming dimensions. The major city in this part of the country was

seized in early May, and from here the insurgents issued the following proclamation:

"Society rests on family ties, the rulers' relationship with the governed. The master ought to be considerate of his servants, and the servants obedient to their master. If our home and our country's government were founded on these principles, we would have been happy. Our present king is good, loving, and merciful. The Great God is a witness to his righteousness. If honest and competent ministers had stood by him, we would have been as happy as our ancestors under Mun's and Kei's dynasties.

We cannot understand the present ministers' behavior. They are not only careless in carrying out their duties, but steal from the state treasury. Thus they conceal the king's wisdom from us, and our pleas do not reach his throne. When we turn to them in our misery, they tell us that we are dissolute, ignorant, and dishonest, and our petitions are returned to us. There is not a single faithful official near the throne, and the ministers – well, they are themselves the most ignorant.

As a consequence of this the people are revolting, and the revolution grows day by day. It is difficult for us to exist and we are every day subject to tyrannical overreach.

The cries for revenge are heard from all quarters. There is no honesty or faith between master and servant anymore. The relations between the upper and lower classes no longer are as they should be. Misery rules everywhere. Life is not worth living.

Kvan Sa teaches that when there is discord between the people in a society, the country will perish. Now it is worse

than in those old days. The ministers do not care about the looming danger facing the country; they only think of themselves to become rich and fat. The examination halls have been made into a source of money-making, and government offices are for sale. Instead of filling the royal treasury, they fill their own.

The results are that the country has an enormous national debt, and there is little thought given to reducing it. Eight provinces have been robbed of all their meat and all their fish. The people are destitute. We are surrounded by greed and all kinds of dissipation, and that is why the people live in misery and poverty. The people are gradually extirpated. Soon no one will survive.

We are only peasants and unlearned folk, but we still cannot just sit down and view our dangerous position with equanimity. Thousands and thousands have taken counsel together. The eight provinces are all of the same mind.

We have then all sworn together as patriots that we will offer our lives and property to help His Majesty the King further the welfare of his people.

Though circumstances in these times may bring disaster to us, we ask that all others remain with their peaceful occupations. You are our friends. For you we fight and die.

May good fortune favor you! Long live the king!"

*

One army corps after the other was sent from Seoul to quell the rebellion, but the undisciplined government soldiers only added to the danger, since most of them made common cause with the insurgents.

On May 27th the Korean minister of war recommended that the king should appeal to his liege lord, the emperor of China, for assistance.

His Majesty shrank from taking this step as long as he could. He perhaps had an inkling about the complications that would follow, but when the rebel army came closer and closer to the capital, the king saw no other way out, and on June 3^d he signed the fateful document, wherein he officially requested China's assistance.

The imperial commissioner in Seoul, Yuan, immediately telegraphed the contents of the royal letter to Li Hung-chang, and a day later the king received in reply a message that a Chinese army corps would come to his relief as quickly as possible. Yuan *at the same time* informed the Japanese embassy as well as all the other legations in Seoul about the answer to the king's request. This last fact should be emphasized, since the Japanese press later has insisted that the Japanese ambassador had *not* received notification that the Chinese government would send troops to Korea, which would have been a breach of the treaty signed in Tientsin in 1885.

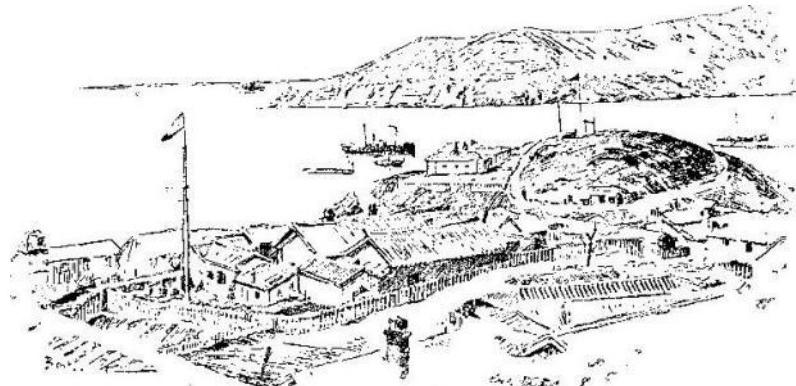
According to this, China and Japan had agreed that neither country must send troops over to Korea in case of disturbances there without first officially informing the other. Nor did the Japanese ambassador in Seoul initially make any objections to the arrangement. He only informed Yuan that Japan would send a few police detachments over to Korea to protect the Japanese residents. There was no mention of troops.



Li Hui
King of Korea, born 1851.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

The Chinese troops commanded by General Yeh landed already on the 9th of June by Asan, or Yashan, which lies ca. 50 miles from Seoul – and at the same time 8,400 Japanese marines went ashore at Chemulpo and marched up to the capital.



The view of Chemulpo harbor.

There would not be any more, the Japanese ambassador, Mr. Otori, assured his colleagues. But three days later another whole regiment landed at Chemulpo. *But no more*, the charmingly venerable Mr. Otori again assured the world.

But despite these diplomatic assurances, 10,000 Japanese elite troops, equipped with siege guns and 3 months of provisions had come up to the capital by the end of the month under Major General Oshima – to protect the embassy and the Japanese residents, whom no one had thought to harm.

Most of the *Togagu-to** had found it most prudent to lay down their weapons as soon as the Chinese landed at Asan.

* Also called *Tong Hak*.

Yuan therefore proposed already on June 20th that the Chinese and Japanese troops should leave the peninsula *at the same time*.

But Mr. Otori was of a different opinion. For appearances sake, he first proposed that China and Japan in concert should take over the government of the whole peninsula and introduce the necessary reforms.



Mr. Otori, Japanese ambassador in Seoul.

To this Yuan, who continuously received instruction from Li Hung-chang, replied that China could not accede to such an arrangement, since *the central government on principle never interfered in its vassal states domestic administration unless specifically requested to do so*.

The Japanese government finally dropped its mask. On June 28th Otori marched up before the king's residence with



Li Chok
Crown prince of Korea, born 1873.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

his embassy guard, requested an audience, and delivered an ultimatum from Tokyo, wherein, among other things, it was demanded that Korea declare itself "independent" and authorize Japan to introduce the necessary reforms in the several branches of its administration.

The king was given a week to think it over, and he used this grace period to confer with the government in Peking.

The emperor immediately called his ministers and several of the empire's other high officials together to consider their situation. There was a rather warm debate, during which Tsung-li Yamen's president, Prince Ching, and Grand Secretary Fu Kun spoke for peace with Japan at any price.

The other members of the gathering, however, felt that China could not afford to submit to the brazenly arrogant islanders yet one more time. The government would stand as a laughingstock before the entire world. If Japan had refrained from sending so many troops and had initiated negotiations with China, they would have advised the emperor to stretch as far as possible to satisfy Japan's greed. But the last reports from Korea indicated that Japan intended to humiliate China, and a major power like China could not just let that pass.

When the report of the outcome of the meeting was received by the emperor, he called on the dowager empress for her opinion. She is said to have stated that China's vassal *must* be supported, and that an army should be sent to Korea at once to reinstitute law and order. The honor and standing of the empire was now at risk, and she believed that a firm posture would bring the Japanese government to its senses.

So that we may fully understand the importance of the dowager empress' statement, I will briefly sketch this remarkable woman's career.

The emperor Hien Fêng [Xianfeng Emperor] drew his last breath 22 August 1861 at his summer residence in Yehol [now Chengde] in Manchuria. His little six years old son Tung Che [Tongzhi Emperor] inherited an empire that had just groaned and creaked in all its joints from the Taiping Rebellion and a people that had just been shamed in the most humiliating fashion by the allied Western powers' conquering march to Peking*.

This was not a promising inheritance, and the regents that Hien Fêng appointed before his death, hardly helped to make the prospects brighter, since they were known for being the least intelligent and the most conservative and xenophobic of the entire imperial family.

But fortunately for China and the Manchu dynasty there were also other influential individuals, who thought themselves better entitled to hold the regency during the young emperor's minority. They were Hien Fêng's brother, Prince Kung, his childless widow Tsi An [Ci'an], and the concubine Tsi Thsi [Cixi], Tung Che's mother.

These three formed an alliance, and by a palace coup they managed to remove the appointed regents a few months after Emperor Hien Fêng's death.

Now began a brighter period in China's history. In the following 30 years the country progressed significantly. The deep wounds from the civil war healed and the empire's political standing rose.

* During the 2nd Opium War.

These improvements owed a lot to the concubine Ts'i Thsi. Due to her youth and inexperience she of course could not play a major role in deciding important matters of state in the early days of the regency, but she still maintained her prestige as the emperor's mother, and, by an intense study in all fields paired with an unusual intelligence, she soon figured out how to gain control of the empire's rudder, and she took hold of that with a strength unknown since the days of the first Manchu rulers.

Fortunately, Prince Kung was a man, who yielded peacefully when his views did not agree with those of his female colleagues, and the empress Ts'i An, who is described as a most amiable lady with a gentle disposition and no lust for power, found it much more pleasant to occupy herself with establishing hospitals and temples than to carry her share of the regency's burdens.

Tung Che came of age in 1873 and took over the government. Both empresses then withdrew to their private lives, but the emperor's uncle, Prince Kung, stayed on as prime minister. Tung Che presumably found that the prince still treated him as a child, since shortly after ascending the throne he issued a decree whereby the prime minister was dismissed and also stripped of his rank as a prince of the empire.

His Majesty, however, seems to have been given an earful by his forceful mother as to what he owed Prince Kung, since a couple of days later he was reinstated in all his positions, and that in a decree that was signed by the two female ex-regents – proof that they had only nominally surrendered their powers.

And they soon got them back in full. Tung Che died of smallpox in 1875, and his mother's lawful claim to a share in the imperial government should then also have lapsed.

The emperor's widow, Alu-ta, was with child, and if she gave birth to a son, she would take Ts'i Thsi's place in a new regency.

But this willful, ambitious woman did not wish to give up her place to her daughter-in-law. Without bothering with the interesting circumstances Alu-ta found herself in, Ts'i Thsi resolved to get herself a new heir to the empire, and for the first time under this dynasty, the choice of an heir to the throne became dependent on the discretion of the reigning rulers.

The choice of the new emperor was indifferent to the triumvirate as long as the child was young enough – the younger, the longer the regency would last. Prince Kung, who was Emperor Hsien Fêng's oldest brother, had a son, but he was so old that he soon would be of age to take over the government himself if he was chosen. So this potential choice was discarded. The next in turn was the son of Prince Chun, Kung's younger brother. This child was serviceable – and by this stroke of fate the present emperor came to the throne.*

And poor Alu-ta! What happened to her? She was in the way, and the palace heir can sometimes be hazardous for such persons. She sickened away and died before her child was born. Of grief for her departed husband, sympathetic people said.

* That it went so smooth was due to Li Hung-chang, who had promised them the support of the military.



Prince Kung

Born 1814, son of Emperor Tao Kuang (1821-1850).

(This page intentionally left blank.)

Since the new heir to the throne was only 4 years old, the two empresses and Prince Kung again took over the regency without anyone trying to prevent their resumption of power.

Tsi Thsi now threw herself with re-doubled energy into the administration and soon became a veritable plague for the old censors and cabinet ministers by the numerous reform plans she proposed. These efforts took a toll on her strength, and since the forceful lady never had very good health, one was not surprised to hear rumors that Tsi Thsi lay hopelessly ill in the palace.

The great Mohammedan uprising in Turkestan had just been crushed, and the conflict with Russia over the Ili province had been resolved by Marquis Tsêng by the Treaty of St. Petersburg 12 February 1881. She therefore could have gone to her ancestors serene in the knowledge that China, which had gone through so many crises under her leadership, now had come back on the right track again.

On the 18th of April the outer world was told that the empress had died. But how astonished was the nation, when a couple of days later it was told that it was her colleague Tsi An, who had mounted the dragon and flown up into the blue sky!

This event caused a great sensation in the capital, and the most peculiar rumors went around. However, the mysteries of oriental palaces are rarely revealed, and we will probably never hear the reason for the poor empress' sudden demise. But Tsi Thsi soon recovered and has enjoyed a wonderful wellbeing since then.

Her influence also now increased significantly. She had always hated the strict court etiquette, which her colleague

had maintained to the last detail and she at once began to loosen the old rules and forms causing great consternation among the conservative censors.

Instead of staying discreetly inside the imperial palace, she has every summer moved her residence to the enchanting park grounds outside Peking, and here Her Majesty is said to amuse herself as a common mortal and even pass the time with archery and other sports, which certainly has sorely scandalized many of her subjects of the old school.

During the Tonking war the dowager empress fell out with her old colleague, Prince Kung, and her power had grown to such an extent that this meritorious statesman had to retire to private life without protest.

For a while she then stood alone by the rudder, though with loyal help of her powerful subject, the great Li Hung-chang, who had been her confidential adviser throughout the regency period.

In 1889 the young emperor came of age and took over the government and issued an official decree wherein he thanked his adoptive mother in the most flattering terms for her strong and wise rule during his minority and hoped that she still would stand by him with wise counsel for many years to come.

The Dowager Empress Tsi Thsi's long reign is one of the most remarkable periods of China's history. The Chinese people's prejudice against female rule has not evaporated, but it has been shaken. That says a lot, since this prejudice was rather deeply rooted in the nation's heart, and with good reason, as earlier experiences with female rulers have been anything but congenial for the Chinese. But the brilliance

with which the Dowager Empress Tsi Thsi has steered the ship of state through waves and reefs for nearly 30 years perhaps now casts a more cheerful light over female rule.

This we may see from the grand preparations being made for celebrating her sixtieth birthday on November 7th 1894. Already the year before one could read in the Peking Gazette hints of the magnificence and splendor that the nation would display on that occasion. More than 25 million dollars were to be expended to honor one of the greatest and best empresses who have ruled the empire.

But fate decreed otherwise. Japan could not wait until the celebrations were over. The white veil of sorrow enveloped the golden splendor of the festivities and among the hymns of joy wails of woe were heard on her birthday – deep, heavy laments from the Chinese mothers who had lost their sons at Pingyang or in the wet grave by the mouth of the Yalu River.

Chapter Twenty-three

Li Hung-chang wants peace – The Japanese press agitate for war – The king of Korea is taken prisoner – The English transport ship "*Kowshing*" is sunk – A naval engagement – The "victory" at Seiwan – The Chinese and Japanese emperors' declarations of war.

While the authorities in Peking discussed what position China should take, Li Hung-chang tried as best he could to smooth the way for a peaceful solution. In the last several years he had fended off so many dangers with his exquisite diplomatic tact and dexterity. It was therefore understandable that the old statesman hoped to bring China out of this crisis as well. He left the troops he had gathered where they were and called on both England and Russia to mediate.

Li Hung-chang knew better than anyone else that peace at any cost would be best for China until the antiquated military organization could be replaced with a more modern system. A few years of patience would be more fruitful than to begin a war with the first spires that had sprouted from his new plan of organization for the empire's military forces.

We can guess what the Russians' reply was. They proposed that the Japanese and the Chinese should both

withdraw from Korea – presumably to make it easier for Russia to establish a protectorate on the peninsula.

It is quite likely that Li Hung-chang had got the emperor and the dowager empress to go along with a similar arrangement, but by reading the Japanese newspapers in those days, it would soon be apparent that any such proposal would be stillborn.

Count Okuma thus wrote in *Hochi Shimbun*: "The time has now come to wash off the shameful stain from 1884. By making intelligent use of this opportune moment it is possible for the government to atone for its previous errors and make the Japanese empire respected both in China and the rest of the world."

Another well-known nobleman wrote in *Japan Mail*: "The majority of the nation is tired of the long peace. This luxurious tranquility has never been highly valued among the brave, spirited Japanese, and nothing would be more welcome on this occasion than to venture a military campaign abroad. It will be a good means of removing internal quarrels and stopping political cackle."

The entire press was full of such statements without the censors saying a word. The warlike tone clearly showed that Japan would force a break with China at any price. And if a European power was to interfere – then the Japanese were ready to take on the peacemaker too. This prospect probably frightened the major powers into rejecting England's proposal for a joint mission.

In the meantime the king of Korea had promised Otori that his government would consider Japan's reform proposals, but he let the question of a Chinese or Japanese protectorate

stand open until China had made a decision. Upon inquiry by telegraph, Li Hung-chang had given him a free hand if the Japanese were to use force. And it soon came to that.

The Japanese government did not even bother to listen to the king's quibbles. On July 23^d a part of the occupying force in Seoul attacked His Majesty's residence, which was defended by a couple of thousand Korean soldiers equipped with Gatling guns. They put up a brave defense, but were overcome and driven to flight. The whole royal family was conveyed under heavy guard to the Japanese embassy, and soldiers were sent to the Chinese commissioner's residence. Fortunately, Yuan had already left and had taken the most important papers with him. The secretaries Tong and Chi escaped in disguise to the British legation, but a Chinese sentry was cut down when he refused the soldiers to enter.

More could hardly be done from the Japanese side to force a declaration of war. Li Hung-chang was informed already on July 20th as to what was likely to happen in Seoul and now realized that war was unavoidable. On the same day 1,900 soldiers and some ammunition were sent on the chartered steamships "*Feiching*" and "*Irene*" to reinforce General Yeh's position at Asan.

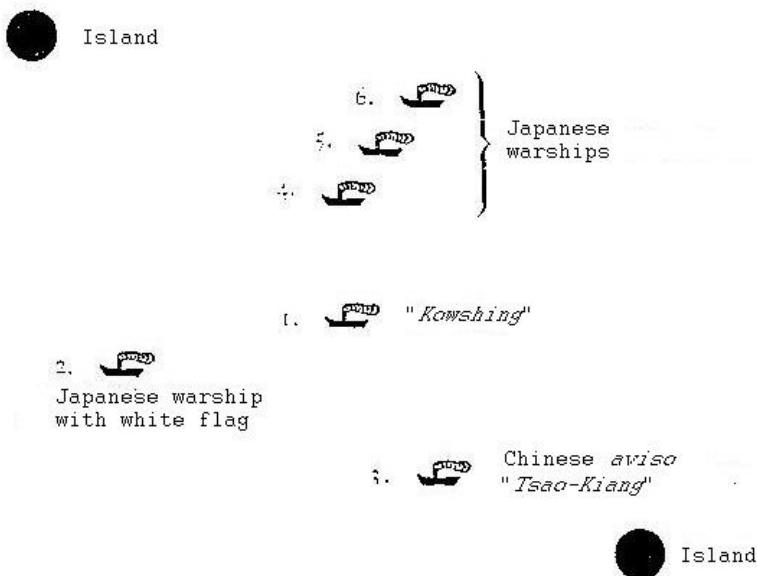
On the 23^d "*Kowshing*" was sent with 1,200 men and 12 Gatling guns. Besides the ship's officers, there was also another European aboard, the well-known German citizen Constantin von Hanneken, who had been in Chinese government service since 1879.

The sworn testimony that these gentlemen later gave in court give us the following information about the sad fate of this transport ship. In the morning on the 23^d of July

"Kowshing" had arrived in the vicinity of Prince Jerome Gulf south of Incheon. A large warship was observed, steering westerly under full steam and was soon out of sight. At 7 o'clock a ship under sail was observed on the starboard bow. An hour later 4 large warships came out from the group of islands in the gulf.

By about 9 o'clock the first had come close enough that one could make out the Japanese flag with a white flag hoisted above it. The ship steered toward "Kowshing" under full power and saluted with the flag as it passed by.

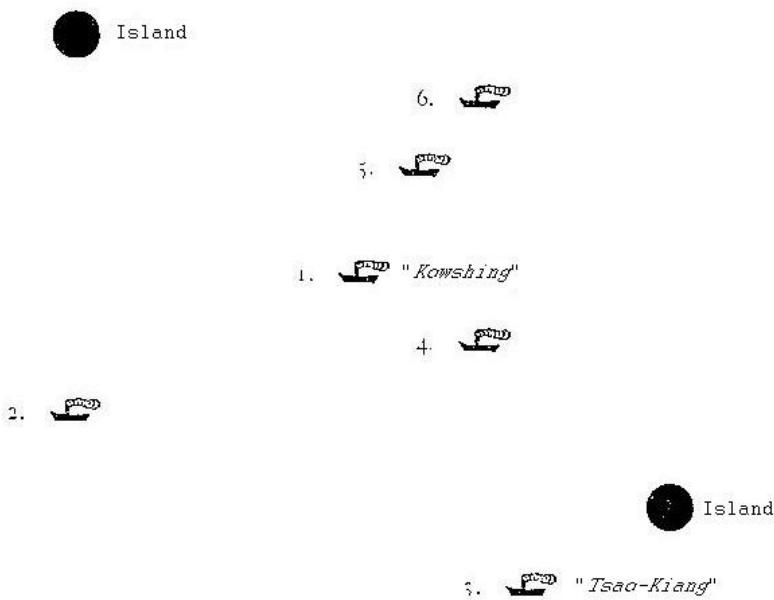
"Kowshing's" position was then as shown below:



The vessel that had been seen under sail turned out to be the aviso* "Tsao-Kiang." It had now taken its sails down and steered under steam toward Wei-hai-wei.

* *Aviso* - small navy ships designed to carry orders or dispatches.

The captain on "*Kowshing*" became alarmed at the sight of so many Japanese warships, since the Japanese certainly had been warned about his ship's departure from Tientsin. He was relieved a little when they saluted with the flag, but then a couple of warning shots were fired from No. 4 at the same time as it signaled: "Stop or take the consequences!" "*Kowshing*" hove to, and the ships' positions were then thus:



No. 4 then moved toward Nos. 5 and 6, presumably to confer with its fellows about how to deal with "*Kowshing*," since the ship carried an *English* flag.

After a few minutes No. 4 returned and lowered an armed boat, which headed toward "*Kowshing*." Several officers came onboard and went straight to the captain's cabin. Captain Galsworthy showed them his ship's papers to prove to them that "*Kowshing*" rightfully carried the English flag.

He was then ordered to follow in the warship's wake, and the officers left "*Kowshing*."

Von Hanneken then went to the Chinese officer in command and told him what the Japanese had demanded. When the general informed his subordinate officers about this, there was a terrific hubbub. They said they would rather be shot on the spot than be taken prisoner, and all the Europeans were threatened with death if the captain obeyed the Japanese command.



On the deck of "*Kowshing*."

Von Hanneken explains the Japanese demands to the Chinese generals. The other two Europeans are Captain Galsworthy and 1st Mate Tamplin.

Von Hanneken then asked Captain Galsworthy to hoist a signal to the boat to return and went down the ladder and told

the Japanese officers: "The captain will not be allowed to carry out your order. The Chinese officers and soldiers demand to return to the harbor they came from. The captain and I consider this to be a proper and reasonable demand even though war has already been declared, since we left Tientsin before that was the case."

The Japanese said they would report all this to the captain on "*Naniwa*" – that was the name of their ship – and again rowed away from "*Kowshing*."

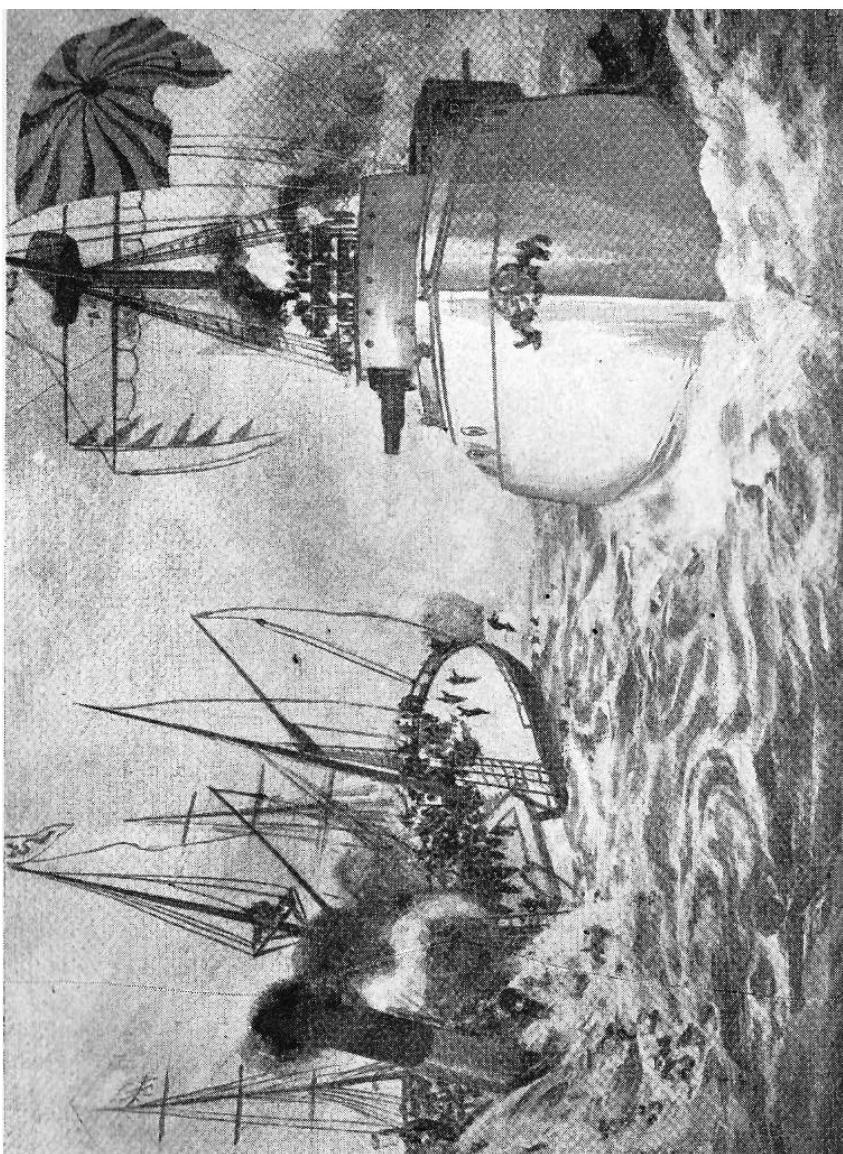
A quarter of an hour passed and then the Japanese signaled: "Abandon ship as quickly as possible." This was probably meant for the Europeans and the ship's crew. Captain Galsworthy then hoisted a signal stating that the Chinese soldiers would not permit it.

"*Naniwa*" then moved toward "*Kowshing*," and when it was about 150 meters away, fired simultaneously a torpedo and the six starboard cannon into the transporter's port side. The torpedo hit "*Kowshing*" mid-ships in the coal bunkers, and the air filled with splinters and coal. Some of the soldiers leaped overboard, while others fired their rifles until the ship sank. "*Naniwa*" again lowered an armed boat into the water – rescue the swimmers, one would think – but regrettably no.

The Japanese officers may perhaps have heard about how the French behaved in Foochow in 1884* and presumably thought they should emulate the Europeans – All swimmers that could be found were murdered with machine guns.

* Under a flag of truce, a French squadron ran past the forts up to the treaty port at Foochow and sank a number of *junks* and small gun sloops on the 23^d of August 1884. 3,000 Chinese officers and sailors lost their lives to the gallant Frenchmen's projectiles.

"Naniwa" and "Kowshing"



(This page intentionally left blank.)

Of 1,200 men only 200 saved themselves by swimming. The Japanese were so obliging as to save Captain Galsworthy and a couple of other Europeans. They were picked up by "*Naniwa's*" boat and had to sit and watch as the poor Chinese were shot down like dogs.

Von Hanneken got over to a small island in a pitiable condition after 4 hours of swimming. He was rescued from here by a Korean fisherman and brought to Chemulpo.

The reports of this atrocity struck the Europeans in the East with horror, and the press vociferously demanded that the European powers step in at once stop this outbreak of a war that, judging by the behavior of the Japanese, would be fought in an anything but civilized manner.

The demand was certainly well-intentioned, but got no response, since the Japanese government's menacing posture fortunately prevented the Western powers from interfering. I say fortunately. A concerted action in East Asia is not practically possible, and anyone can see what would happen if England or Russia were to enter the arena by themselves. Thus the British government took the "*Kowshing*" incident relatively calmly and contented itself with making Japan promise to give the ship's owners full compensation.

For the Japanese, the sinking of the transport ship was important, since the 1,200 soldiers onboard were elite troops trained by European officers, and if "*Kowshing*" had made it safely to Asan like "*Feiching*" and "*Irene*," it would have been difficult for the Japanese to drive General Yeh out of his fortifications.

*

We remember that a Chinese *aviso* was observed from "Kowshing." This ship had come from Wei-hai-wei and was carrying mail and a Danish telegrapher, Mr. Muhlensteth, over to Korea. When "Kowshing" had been sunk, it was "Tsao-Kiang's" turn. One of the Japanese warships soon caught up with the ship, which surrendered offering no resistance.

Meanwhile, two Chinese warships had appeared; the armored cruiser "Tsi-Yuen" and the torpedo boat "Kuang-Yu." They had been lying at Asan to assist with the landing of troops from "Feiching" and "Irene," which had left Asan early in the morning without being accosted, and a while later the warships also came out. Shortly after "Tsao-Kiang" was taken, they met up with a couple of the vessels that had accompanied "Naniwa." They were the cruisers "Akitsushima" and "Yoshino."

	Displacement	No. of cannon	Horsepower
"Akitsushima"	3,150	20	8,500
"Yoshino"	4,260	17	15,800
"Tsi-Yuen"	2,350	5	2,800
"Kuang-Yu"	1,000	3	1,200

The Japanese at once raised the red flag to indicate hostile intent and fired their broadsides into the Chinese ships, which were not prepared for battle. On "Tsi-Yuen" they had even covered the cannon in protective canvas, and no ammunition was on deck. It therefore tried to escape under full steam pursued by "Yoshino," while "Kuang-Yu," which did not have sufficient speed to follow, had to take up the fight with "Akitsushima."

"*Kuang-Yu*" had only 3 12 cm. rapid-firing cannon in addition to its torpedo launch tubes. "*Akitsushima*" immediately overwhelmed its little opponent with projectiles. One of them penetrated the torpedo room and crushed a torpedo, which lay in the tube ready to be fired, and killed several of the crew. At the same time, "*Kuang-Yu*" had shot down "*Akitsushima's*" bridge and caused much destruction on its deck.

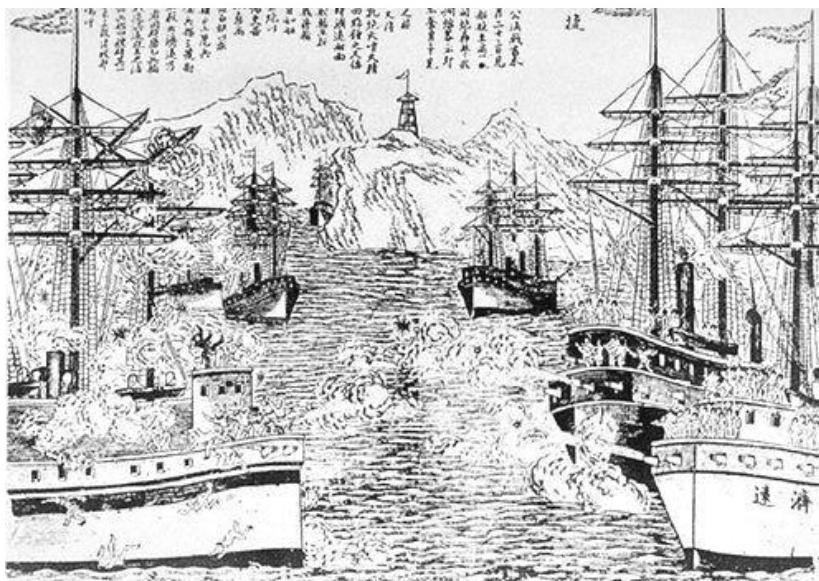
When Captain Lin realized that "*Kuang-Yu's*" demise was certain, he decided to try to ram his large opponent and fire a torpedo at the same time. But the ship turned too late, and when "*Akitsushima*" went full ahead, "*Kuang-Yu*" came under its stern and at the same moment was hit by a shell that went right through its side, dismounted the cannons, and set the ship on fire.

Captain Lin then decided to try to run "*Kuang-Yu*" aground on shore in order to save his crew. He managed to reach the beach and bring the wounded ashore with great difficulty while exposed to "*Akitsushima's*" machine guns. However, he had to leave onboard the 26 men who were killed in this mismatched contest. From a nearby ridge Captain Lin shortly thereafter saw his burning ship explode.

When "*Tsi-Yuen's*" got its cannon cleared for action and they had steam to the turrets, it took up the battle with "*Yoshino*." Right off the bat, "*Tsi-Yuen*" was hit by several shells, which damaged the gun turrets and killed several members of the crew. This had such demoralizing effect on the men that several ran away from the guns, but the officers soon got them back to their stations, and the cannonade was

answered so effectively from "*Tsi-yen*" that "*Yoshino*" had to withdraw for repairs after about an hour's battle.

The Chinese made use of this reprieve to again try to get away and to repair the steering mechanism, but "*Yoshino*" soon returned to the fight and overtook "*Tsi-Yuen*" with its greater speed. The battle resumed, and "*Yoshino*" tried to torpedo its opponent. But the captain, Commodore Fong, ran his vessel in circles under full steam, such that he never showed his broadside to "*Yoshino*" and thus kept the Japanese from firing torpedoes, and "*Tsi-Yuen*" managed to hit its pursuer with two shells that decided the unequal fight in favor of the Chinese.



Popular depiction of the naval battle at Asan.

Reproduction of a Chinese cartoon.

"*Yoshino*" apparently was seriously damaged, since it immediately ceased firing and withdrew so rapidly that a third shot from its underpowered adversary did not reach it.

"*Tsi-Yuen*," which feared that "*Yoshino*" would return with help, at once headed under full steam to We-hai-wei, where it arrived the following day with 13 dead and 23 wounded.

The Japanese losses are unknown. From the beginning of the war they applied the sensible tactic of keeping all that concerned military operations absolutely secret, — to the extent that they could.

*



Major General Oshima

Several reinforcements that General Yeh had received in June and July had brought his fighting force up to ca. 3,900 men. The day after the king was taken prisoner, Major General Oshima gave orders to march south against General Yeh, partially to prevent him from moving north when the

official declaration of war reached him, and partially to prevent him from joining forces with the reinforcements that had been sent from Tientsin. Oshima had been warned about this by telegraph, since the Japanese had already managed to insert spies into Li Hung-chang's inner circle. As recounted above, 1,900 men got safely ashore soon enough to join the defensive forces.

The first shots were exchanged between the advancing Japanese troops and the Chinese outposts on the 26th of July, and the main forces collided on the following day. The attack was turned back with significant losses on the Japanese side.

This unexpected setback caused some consternation in Tokyo, where a victory was needed to awaken the people's enthusiasm for war, and orders were telegraphed to Seoul for the whole Japanese army to march south. Since the distance was not more than 30 miles, Oshima received the reinforcements already on the morning of the 29th and then had nearly 9,000 men under his command.

But General Yeh, who realized that the situation was untenable with the troops at his disposal, immediately decided to avoid his more powerful enemy. All heavy and unnecessary baggage was left in camp guarded by 300 soldiers. The rest marched south to Hongju.

When the Japanese scouts informed Oshima of the Chinese withdrawal, he decided at 3 o'clock in the afternoon to attack the guard left behind. A victory had to be produced, however trivial.

The village where Yeh had camped was called Seiwan, or Søwan, and this place was immediately surrounded by the Japanese troops. The 300 Chinese fought with the courage of



The battle of Seiwan
Reproduction of Japanese print. Japanese war correspondents in the newest fashionable attire are seen at right.

(This page intentionally left blank)

despair, but were cut down to the last man. The Japanese lost still more, since at nightfall they could not distinguish friend from foe, and a number of their soldiers were killed by "friendly fire" before the error was discovered. General Oshima made no attempt to pursue the Chinese. He had presumably been informed that Chinese troops were marching in across Korea's northern border. But for the time being, a victory had been won – the victory at Seiwan – and Japan resounded with martial fervor. The victorious troops returned to Seoul, where they held a triumphant parade on July 31st.

*

*

*

The official declarations of war were issued on August 1, and with that the hope that the Western powers would move Japan to negotiate came to naught. It was realized that the government in Tokyo absolutely wanted to induce a war to turn the nation's attention away from the threatening internal dissensions. The Japanese emperor's declaration of war read as follows:

"We, the Emperor of the Empire of Great Japan, having ascended the throne by virtue of a lineal succession unbroken for ages eternal, fully assured of heavenly aid, do announce to all our brave and loyal subjects that we hereby declare war against China.

All our officials and officers, with a view to the carrying out of our intentions, should devote themselves to warlike matters or to carrying on the war against China, and in all respects strive to further the national object.

They are desired to leave nothing undone, but on the contrary to use every means to this end, within the limits of their respective offices and in a manner not prejudicial to international law.

Over 20 years have now elapsed since our accession to the throne. During this time we have consistently pursued the policy of peace, being deeply impressed with a sense of the undesirability of being in strained relations with other nations, and have always directed our officials diligently to endeavor to promote friendship with all the Treaty Powers. Fortunately our intercourse with the nations has continued to increase in intimacy.

Contrary to our expectations, however, every act of China towards this country in connection with the affairs of Corea has been opposed to the principles that should govern the relations between friendly nations, and has been a breach of good faith towards Japan.

Corea is an independent country, which was first induced by Japan to open its doors to foreign intercourse, and to take its place among the nations of the world. Yet China has always described it as her tributary and has both openly and secretly interfered with its internal affairs. On the recent insurrection breaking out in the peninsula, China, on the pretext that she meant to protect her tributary from calamity, sent troops thither. We, by virtue of the provisions of the Convention of 1885, despatched troops to Corea to deal with the emergency, and also we have made efforts to relieve Corea from internal disturbance, and by maintaining peace in that country to secure the peace of the East. We asked China to co-operate with us to that end. China, however, on various pleas, declined our request. We thereupon advised Corea to remedy the abuses in her administration and strengthen the guarantees of domestic peace and order, while also perfecting her privileges as an independent nation. Corea adopted the suggestions of this

country. China, however, offered every obstruction to, and caused delay in, the carrying out of reforms; and that country, moreover, began the preparation of land and sea forces with a view to war. On the completion of her preparation she attempted to achieve the object of her ambitions with reference to Corea, dispatching more troops to Corea and attacking our men-of-war in the Corean Sea. China thus acted toward Japan in an exceedingly lawless fashion. It is now beyond doubt that the project of China is to destroy the authority responsible for the maintenance of peace in Corea, and to degrade into obscurity that country which Japan introduced to the world as an independent nation, to ignore the treaties which clearly defined her independent status, and thereby to injure the rights and interests of Japan and destroy forever all assurance of peace in the East. Judging from the actions of China so far, her scheme must have aimed at the sacrifice of all peaceful guarantees and the accomplishment at nil costs of her own objects. To this stage the situation has now developed.

Though it has always been our desire to maintain peace with all nations, and in doing so to display the glory of our empire at home and abroad, we have now no course open to us but to declare war, in the hope that we may be able to restore peace in good time, and thus to vindicate the prestige of Japan by the loyalty and bravery of our subjects."

Given the 1st day of the 8th month of the 27th year
of Meiji.*

Imperial Sign Manual (Privy Seal)

(Signatures of all Ministers of State.)

* The Japanese calendar used for official business is divided into periods named for the reigning emperor. Meiji is the period after 1868.

For historical judgment, this important document will only have value to the extent that it expresses what the Japanese government *wished* that the common man and the Western nations should believe about the reasons for the war.

If the outer world did not have other sources of information than those provided by the Japanese, one likely would come to the same conclusion as the majority of the European newspapers in the early days of the war: *There is no doubt that Japan is in the right.*



Mutsu Hito
("The Meiji Emperor)
The 122nd Mikado of Japan.

But unfortunately for the "peaceful" Japanese, whom I admire in so many other respects, we have had a wealth of sources to consult, almost too many.

To draw the unadulterated truth out of the innumerable self-contradicting accounts from diverse quarters has caused much headache and more work than most people would think. But I also hope that the historical sequence of events that I have presented here will stand up to any historical criticism.

In the declaration of war, the Japanese emperor pretends to be a thoroughly wronged innocent, who has always desired peace at any price. But that will not wash for an impartial historian, who knows that the "peace loving" Japanese stood armed to the teeth when the war was declared, which certainly was not the case with the "warlike" Chinese.

The invasion of Korea was decided on several years ago, and with this goal in mind the Japanese government has worked steadily to create an army and navy equal to the task. The peninsula was mapped with great care and the military plans worked out to the smallest details by a war department that in ability and intelligence could compete with any in Europe. These facts are very complimentary of the organizational talents of the Japanese people, but they totally knock the legs out from under the emperor's solemn declaration of war.

Japan has done its utmost to bring about the break with China. The interest that Japan has pretended to have for reforms in Korea under the mask of civilization also has immediately shown itself to be absorbed by the desire to govern the peninsula in the same manner as the English govern Egypt. The Japanese press has, characteristically

enough, cited almost word for word the arguments that appeared in English papers in regard to the Egyptian question. Thus the Western colonizing powers can hardly have any effective objections to make against the Japanese aggressive behavior in the East. They can at the most only be envious that the energetic nation has so quickly learned to follow their principles with regard to other peoples' property.



Kwang Hsü

Emperor of China. Born 1871. The 9th of the Manchu dynasty.

The conditions in Korea undoubtedly were as poor as could be, but for that, Japan and the other intriguing powers are not without guilt, and most Koreans would have preferred

to have their reforms carried out by their own progressive leaders rather than having the reforms forced onto them by their archenemies.

They have looked, and probably will also in the future look, to the dragon throne for protection against foreign meddling on the peninsula. It will take a long time before the Koreans will tolerate their Japanese saviors from the Chinese protectorate.

The people did not readily forget the Japanese assault 300 years ago. In poetry and prose this frightful period is written down in the nation's history. Relics from that time are still preserved — relics that do not flatter Japanese vanity. Traveling on the peninsula, one often encounters ruins and monuments as mementos of Hideyoshi's wild rovers.

It would be desirable that the sons of the new Japan after the war's end would behave so toward the Koreans that the old hatreds evaporate in mutual understanding. They would then be carrying out a mission that would atone for the crimes they so far committed against Korea's peaceful inhabitants.

The Japanese emperor's declaration of war was answered the same day from Peking. The proclamation in translation read as follows:

"Corea has been our tributary for the past two hundred odd years*. She has given us tribute all this time, which is a matter known to the world. For the past dozen years or so Corea has been troubled by repeated insurrections, and we, in sympathy with our small tributary, have as repeatedly sent succour to her aid, eventually placing a Resident in her capital to protect

* The emperor is counting from his dynasty's founding in 1644.

Corea's interests. In the fourth moon of this year another rebellion was begun in Corea, and the king repeatedly asked again for aid from us to put down this rebellion. We then ordered Li Hung-chang to send troops to Corea; and they having barely reached Yashan the rebels scattered. But the *Wo-jēn** without any cause whatever, suddenly sent their troops to Corea, and entered Seoul, the capital of Corea, reinforcing them constantly until they have exceeded ten thousand men. In the meantime the Japanese forced the Corean king to change his system of government, showing a disposition every way of bullying the Coreans. It was found a difficult matter to reason with the *Wo-jēn*. Although we have been in the habit of assisting our tributaries, we have never interfered with their internal government. Japan's treaty with Corea was as one country with another; there is no law for sending large armies to bully a country in this way, and compel it to change its system of government. The various Powers are united in condemning the conduct of the Japanese, and can give no reasonable name to the army she now has in Corea. Nor has Japan been amenable to reason, nor would she listen to the exhortation to withdraw her troops and confer amicably upon what should be done in Corea. On the contrary, Japan has shown herself bellicose without regard to appearances, and has been increasing her forces there. Her conduct alarmed the people of Corea as well as our merchants there, and so we

* *Wo-jēn* is the Chinese common name for the Japanese, who prefer the term *Ji-jēn* (People of the Land of the Sun), since *Wo-jēn* is an old derogatory term that really means "the humble men," or "those who slither." but can also be interpreted as "The Dwarf People."

sent more troops over to protect them. Judge of our surprise then when, halfway to Corea, a number of *Wo-jén* ships suddenly appeared and taking advantage of our unpreparedness opened fire upon our transports at a spot on the sea-coast near Yashan, and damaged them, thus causing us to suffer from their treacherous conduct, which could not be foretold by us. As Japan has violated the treaties and not observed international laws, and is now running rampant with her false and treacherous actions, commencing hostilities herself, and laying herself open to condemnation by the various Powers at large, we therefore desire to make it known to the world that we have always followed the paths of philanthropy and perfect justice throughout the whole complications, while the *Wo-jén*, on the other hand, have broken all the laws of nations and treaties which it passes our patience to bear with. Hence we commanded Li Hung-chang to give strict orders to our various armies to hasten with all speed to root the *Wo-jén* out of their lairs. He is to send successive armies of valiant men to Corea in order to save the Coreans from the chains of bondage. We also command the Manchu generals, viceroys and governors of the Maritime Provinces, as well as the commanders-in-chief of the various armies, to prepare for war and to make every effort to fire on the *Wo-jén* ships if they come into our ports, and utterly destroy them. We exhort our generals to refrain from the least laxity in obeying our commands in order to avoid severe punishment at our hands. Let all know this edict as if addressed to them individually. Respect this!

Under the chop of the Emperor of China.

Chapter Twenty-four

China and Japan's military forces before the war

Before I continue my account of the war, it is necessary to give an overview of the respective military forces *before* the outbreak of war.

I will begin with the Chinese army and navy.

Technical education has as of yet not made much progress in China. The modern Pallas Athena with her steam engines and other scientific resources for peaceful as well as martial purposes could not expect an especially heartfelt welcome from a nation, whose traditional outlook on life is so different from ours. And that this outlook on life has not changed more in all the years since the Europeans arrived – for this they are themselves a reason.

The bearers of Western culture certainly have tried to hammer into the Chinese consciousness with civilization's cannon that, if China is to take its place among the civilized nations, the vast empire must do as the European midget states have done – arm itself to the teeth and abandon the antiquated concept that *peace is happiness for the people*.

But fortunately it will presumably take centuries before the masses of the Chinese race change their views in the direction the Christian nations have shown them. Still, some of the Chinese statesmen have realized that if they are to hold their aggressive neighbors within reasonable borders, they ought to obtain some modern war-making capability – but they had to go slowly, since increased taxes could bring greater calamities than trimming China's land area. It would also take a long time to train competent personnel – and that was the most difficult, since the warrior profession has been considered so demeaning that most respectable citizens have declined to become officers as well as to enlist as soldiers. The lack of respect by which the Chinese regard their soldiers is illustrated by the following adage: "Just as one can make a nail from the poorest piece of iron, the most destitute individual will do for a soldier."

However, we must not delude ourselves that the Chinese have not made any progress in the military sphere since 1861, when an English-French army forced its way up to the capital city without much difficulty. To the contrary; they have made strong progress, especially with regard to weaponry.

Reform in tactics and strategy, on the other hand, is very limited due to elderly unskilled officers resisting the scientific arts of war, which they find difficult to master. The Chinese people are more enduring and patient than any other race, and in among the lower classes, where recruits must be hired, life has little value. But if they got talented and European trained officers to lead them – men who were truly interested in their profession – then

Europeans seem to think that the Opium Wars and the Tonking War were fought against all of the Chinese empire, but this is a quite erroneous assumption. When disturbances occurred, the governors have been, and to some extent still are, only responsible for their own provinces, and they must fund their military operations from their provincial treasuries. This arrangement proved rather practical while China was surrounded by minor Asian states on a lower cultural level. But the logical consequence of the system has been that each governor only worried about the defense of his own province and left his neighbors to their fate unless a command from Peking ordered him to go to their assistance.

The aim of leaving the conduct of wars to the provinces has mainly been to restrict the horrors of war to the least possible area. Thus the Tonking War in 1884 was restricted to the provinces of Kwangtung and Fukien. But the government in Peking has now at least partly realized that a larger war hardly can be sustained without much too large sacrifices by just the part of the country immediately affected, and Li Hung-chang, who has always striven for a more centralized command of the military forces, was some years ago given some authority over the whole nation's defense.

On paper, the Chinese army looks quite impressive, even though in European terms it does not stand in any reasonable proportion to the empire's enormous population. The old army, which was divided into Manchu, Mongol, and Chinese armies, hardly totaled a million men, and the military reformers' efforts have only aimed at making the armies more effective, since they believed that an increase in the numbers would have to be deferred to the future.

Luhying, or "The Green Flag," as the Chinese Army is called, is spread out over all the provinces and has a nominal size of 650,000 men, but I think that in reality the number cannot be greater than ca. 300,000, since each governor usually tries to spare his province as much as possible from expenses for the local military forces.

The regimental commanders must present the ordained number of soldiers in the field at the annual inspections, but anyone, who has lived in China a while, knows *how* the gaps are filled in.

For example, it has been absolutely amazing how hard it is to find an available laborer when His Excellency, the *taotai*, inspects the nearby forts at Wusung. But if one casts a sharp glance over the regimental ranks, it will not be difficult to recognize a number of familiar faces. The coolies are happy to make a half dollar for dressing up as soldiers for a day on the occasion of His Excellency's visit.

Each commander of these military units is allotted a certain sum per month for keeping a certain number of soldiers, but the specified pay per individual is usually so small that the commander may be obliged to dismiss half of the unit after the inspection if he and the regular soldiers are to live carefree – and perhaps put a little aside for when hard times come.

The governors of course know very well how it all works, but with this system they save their provinces from great expenses and at same time can report to Peking that the decreed military force has been inspected.

The viceroys of Canton, Nanking, and Wuchang have apparently made genuine efforts to put real armies in the field

with modern weapons and European training, but my impression is that it will be a long time before their plans can be fully realized.

"The Green Flag" may be good enough as a provincial police force, but they will not stand up to a European or Japanese army. We may thus take these 650,000 paper troops almost out of consideration.

Then there is the new regular army that Li Hung-chang intends to form the core of a future *Imperial Chinese Army*.

During the Taiping Rebellion, the great viceroy had a good occasion by General Gordon's side to become convinced of Western superiority in the military field. "*The Ever Victorious Army*" was dissolved after the rebellion was crushed, but when Li Hung-chang later was appointed viceroy of Chihli, he took some of these tried and proven soldiers into his service. He wanted to organize an army that in the future would ensure Peking against such military promenades as the English and French forces pulled off in 1861.

In the beginning, the whole force hardly amounted to 20,000 men, but after the Franco-German War the viceroy called on several German officers, and it must be said in their favor that they have worked with tireless energy to implement Li Hung-chang's plans.

This new army now consists of 50,000 men and a reserve of 10,000. The infantry is mainly armed with old Mauser rifles and must thus be considered the least effective arm. Nor

* "*The Ever Victorious Army*" consisted of native soldiers and European adventurers, who under General Gordon's command significantly contributed to breaking the Taipingers' power.

is the cavalry much to brag about, since the Chinese lack good horses, and the short-legged Mongol ponies make the cavalry almost look like fast moving infantry. They are armed with Winchester rifles.

On the other hand, the artillery stands on a par with the demands of our times. They are mainly equipped with Krupp field guns. Foreign officers, who have been present at maneuvers, generally give high praise for the artillery's performance.

Li Hung-chang, of course, has to go about re-organizing the military system in a very circumspect manner in order not to awaken the people's antipathy toward the military too strongly. By an imperial decree, he has introduced the principle that the interior provinces also must share in the burden of supporting the new military forces. Before, they went almost entirely free.

The new army is, as mentioned above, mainly intended to defend the capital city, but since Li Hung-chang has been put in charge of Korean affairs, several regiments have been deployed during the war.

In Turkestan, where Yacub Beg tried to make himself independent in the seventies, China has a very respectable army corps of ca. 30,000 men, that has been trained under the famous Liu Chin-tang's direction*. This garrison will hardly

* Liu Chin-tang was one of the leading generals in the army that was sent to Turkestan to crush the uprising. As an award, he was appointed governor in the re-conquered border province, and in this office he is said to have distinguished himself as an administrator. As a result of his energetic efforts, Turkestan is now a flourishing success. Liu Chin-tang retired in 1888 and took up residence in the city of Siang-yin in Hunan. He died 10 August 1894, just as he had taken over the command of the

be able to hold off the Russians in Central Asia, but will still play a role in the future guarding the high plains of Pamir. The main force is stationed in Urumtsi, where a large arsenal and military depot has been established.

Next to Li Hung-chang's army, the Tartar army is the most important defense force. It consists of two groups — descendants of the warriors with which the Manchu chieftain Sun Che conquered China in the 17th century.

The first group, the Banner Army, consists of Manchu, Mongols, and Chinese.* 100,000 men serve in garrisons stationed near the capital, 20,000 are spread around in the largest provincial cities, and 180,000 are in the field in Manchuria.

I think I am not being unfair to these "soldiers," when I say that 90 percent of them at this time must only be considered as good raw material for a future grand army, since very few regiments have received any regular training. Their main skills shown during periodic inspections seem to consist of archery and acrobatic performances.

However, the so-called "Peking Standing Corps," which was organized by the emperor's late father, Prince Chun, and consists of nearly 30,000 men, must be considered apart from the "raw material." But this force hardly comes up to the level of Li's troops in military effectiveness, since Prince Chun would not make use of European instructors.

Hunanese troops, which were to depart for the war arena. In Liu Chin-tang China lost one of its few outstanding military experts.

* Sun Che conquered China mainly by the assistance of the Chinese themselves.

The other group, the Manchurian Army, has 180,000 men on paper, but hardly more than a third have got any kind of military training or have been equipped with modern firearms. The Manchurian cavalry is the main component of this army. Manchuria is governed by a military governor, and the inhabitants have a kind of mandatory military service obligation, which is this group's main significance for the national defense, since in case of emergency, the emperor can conscript every able-bodied man.

Altogether the army that the Chihli province and Manchuria can put in the field against an attack by Japan's disciplined invasion force may be estimated to number 100,000 men. But when we consider that this army has no central command and is as heterogeneous as possible, it is no surprise that Li Hung-chang did his utmost to avert a war until his planned military re-organization is further along.

*

*

*

From the army we now turn to the navy, and from a military point of view, the prospects for defense at sea looked a lot brighter than on land, and China has Li Hung-chang to thank for this also. Without the navy and the sea battle at Yalu, the Japanese might have been able to carry out their bold plan to occupy Peking on the dowager empress' birthday.

Under unbelievable difficulties, the viceroy has managed to create a very respectable fleet during the last 20 years. Before the war the Chinese navy consisted of 4 squadrons.

	Ships	Displace- ment	Cannon	Crew	
The Peiyang squadron	21	32,565	203	3,124	38 of these vessels were built in England or Germany and 26 in Chinese navy shipyards.
The Nanyang squadron	11	9,960	96	1,252	
The Foochow squadron	15	17,760	104	2,028	
The Canton squadron	17	4,140	86	600	
Totals	64	64,425	489	7,004	

The Peiyang squadron alone had to take up the battle against the whole Japanese navy in this war. The squadron owes its existence entirely to Li Hung-chang and has stood directly under his command. The other 3 squadrons were not ordered to sail north, since the government found it best to keep them in reserve to defend the southern provinces. Anyway, I do not think these ships would have been of much use as the personnel and materiel are far from first class.

Li can mainly thank his foreign instructors for the great improvement in the Peiyang squadron in the last several years. Among these, special mention should be given to the English naval officer, Captain Lang, R.N., whom the viceroy appointed as chief instructor with rank of admiral after the Tonking War.

Lang was appointed for a term of five years. His contract ran out in 1890, and Li, who thought his countrymen now could continue without foreign assistance, was reluctant to renew the engagement. He knew how unpopular it was among the navy officers that a foreigner held a top command. Li also thought that Lang pushed too hard. Everything was to be done in a hurry; something that is quite contrary to the Chinese nature.

The result therefore was that Lang after some discussion had to step down with a very gracious acknowledgement of his services and a severance bonus of several hundred thousand dollars.

When the war broke out, Lang was asked to state his opinion about the Chinese fleet. He stated as follows:

"There is the making of anything out of the Chinese. They are well-trained and excellent marksmen, and the discipline is very good. As compared with the Japanese, the Chinese Navy is about equal. Probably, the Japanese have more dash and go, and there is among them more *esprit de corps*. Other-wise, the two naval forces are about the same. When I was in command, the condition of the Chinese Navy was such that I should have had no fear of meeting the Japanese, or, for the matter of that, any other navy.

In steam tactics the Chinese were well to the fore, and their drills were excellent, and unsurpassed anywhere. All depends, however, upon how they are led. With an officer like Admiral Ting, whom I would not hesitate to follow anywhere, the Chinese Navy would prove a splendid force. If the men have confidence in their leaders they will face anything. —

The Chinese ships are very good, but some of their guns are becoming obsolete. Their ironclads are as good as any of our own ships. Their principal battleships were built in 1882. The vessels are kept in good order, and contrary to popular belief, are beautifully clean. The guns also are in excellent order. They are Krupps and Armstrongs, but principally Krupps. —"

Admiral Lang must be considered the European officer with the best knowledge of the fleet's readiness, but in my opinion he should have mentioned some deficiencies that would have presented the Peiyang squadron's performance during the war in a clearer light.

Some of the older officers have not received such training that their crews could have unquestioned faith in their competence. I know from my own experience that Chinese sailors are prone to be critical, and if they find a hole in their superior officer's knowledge, their respect for him soon evaporates.

The naval academy at Tientsin was not established until 1881, and despite the excellent instructors that have been employed at the school, it is not to be expected that young officers should already have acquired sufficient experience in the practical areas of the service. Due to the lack of officers, advancement has also been a bit too fast for the younger officers. Lang could also have mentioned that Li Hung-chang still have not been able to appoint first-class officers to his naval command headquarters in Tientsin. Everything takes time. The command would still have carried out its duties during the war in a reasonably satisfactory manner if only the bureaucrats in Peking had refrained from meddling in their affairs. It happened several times that the command center's orders to Admiral Ting were canceled by contrary orders from Peking.

Due to the vast expanse of the empire, it will be very difficult to organize a common central command for the whole defense system. Li Hung-chang's ideas for centralization had only begun to form before the war. Now it remains

to be seen if the great viceroy and his eventual successors can use the experiences won in the war to carry them out in the years following. Only then can China field a military force that will secure the nation from attacks.

*

*

*

The first priority of the Japanese government after the social revolution was to organize the military forces.

And this organization deserves unqualified admiration, since in 1894 the minister of war had at his disposal a disciplined standing army of 50,000 men that could stand comparison with any European army corps. The first call-up of reserves at the outbreak of war brought the army up to 100,000 men. All of these soldiers had at least one year of active service behind them, and the majority had three years.

This is an astonishing result, when we consider that no more than a hundred years ago, the Japanese soldiers were equipped with armor not unlike that of the Norse *vikings* or the medieval crusaders.

When the feudal system was abolished in 1868, the powerful *daimios*, or feudal lords, had to give up their great incomes to the national government – voluntarily or by force. Thus they were obliged to cut their expenses and discharge their feudal garrisons.

This warrior caste, the *samurai* – which the old feudal system had cherished – in 1868 consisted of nearly a million men, and since a great many of these fighting men then lost their daily bread, we can see why the government did not find it difficult to fill the rolls of the new army.

But, even though the samurai were born warriors, it was difficult to integrate them as soldiers in a modern army. These warriors were proud of their ancient traditions, and when they came under the command of superiors they considered socially inferior, it was difficult to maintain discipline.

This situation was changed by the conscription law of 1874, which mandated military training for all. The modern military system in Japan was introduced in that year. Every Japanese male is now subject to military service from his 17th to his 40th year.

The army is organized as follows:

- I. The standing army.
- II. The standing army's reserve.
- III. The reserve.
- IV. The "*landsturm*."

The total time of service is nominally 23 years, but in reality only 12.

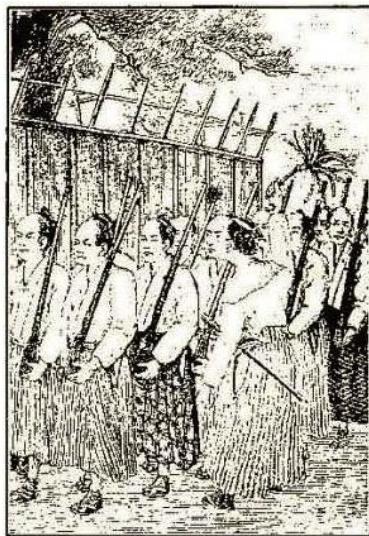
Soldiers, who have taken a kind of reserve lieutenant's examination, as in Germany only have to serve for one year, but then they must pay for their food and uniforms themselves.

Since the annual call-up would bring in more recruits than the army has any use for, an exemption system has been introduced, whereby ca. 40% of the men subject to the draft escape military service.

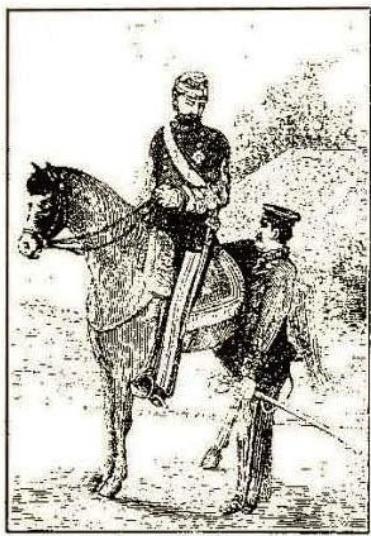
The Japanese army organization differs from those of the European countries' in several ways. Thus an infantry regiment consists of 3 battalions, each with 4 companies. In peacetime, a company has 5 officers, 27 non-commissioned



1



2



4



3

Development stages of the Japanese army in the 19th century.

(This page intentionally left blank)

officers, and 160 privates. In wartime, they are reinforced with 80 additional privates.



A velocipedist in the Japanese army scout corps.

A cavalry company in peacetime comprises 159 men and 135 horses; in wartime 189 men and 140 horses.

An artillery brigade consists of 2 batteries, each of 148 men, 86 horses, and 4 cannon; in wartime each battery is

reinforced with 10 men and 2 cannon. The field pieces are made in the arsenal at Osaka after an Italian model and are of 7½ cm. caliber.

The imperial guard is an elite corps of ca. 6,000 men that are always stationed in Tokyo. The guards can be distinguished from other troops by the red band around their caps. The others have yellow bands.



General Kawakami
Japanese Chief of Staff.

In addition to the line troops and the imperial guard, the war academy students and the police are also counted as parts of the standing army.

The country is divided into 7 military districts. An army corps commanded by a general is stationed in each of these. Altogether, Japan can field a well organized army of 200,000 men.

During my stay in Tokyo in 1892, I was able to observe a military review. Though I wrote about this event in "From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain," I think it may also be of interest here:

It was the 3^d of November. I opened the glass door that led out from one of the Imperial Hotel's lavishly furnished bedrooms to the veranda. Celebration was in the air. A veritable sea of flags, pennants, lanterns, and flower decorations as far as the eye can see. Tokyo has dressed up in its Sunday best, and that is understandable, since its beloved *mikado* is to celebrate his birthday and for that occasion will hold a review of his elite troops.

Our amiable legation secretary, van de Polder, had given me the necessary information, so that I could hire a cab and drive up to the Avogavas parade grounds at once.

Several thousand loyal subjects surround the place. It is very difficult to move ahead, but the courteous military police make way for the European, and I land safely in the ambassador's tent, where a number of "the select" have been given permission to stand during the review.

It is interesting to see a score of nationalities gathered inside a few square meters. Not a trace of the formality which one might expect among such high-ranking diplomats. Even the German has got the spirit and is engaged in a lively conversation with the French consul.

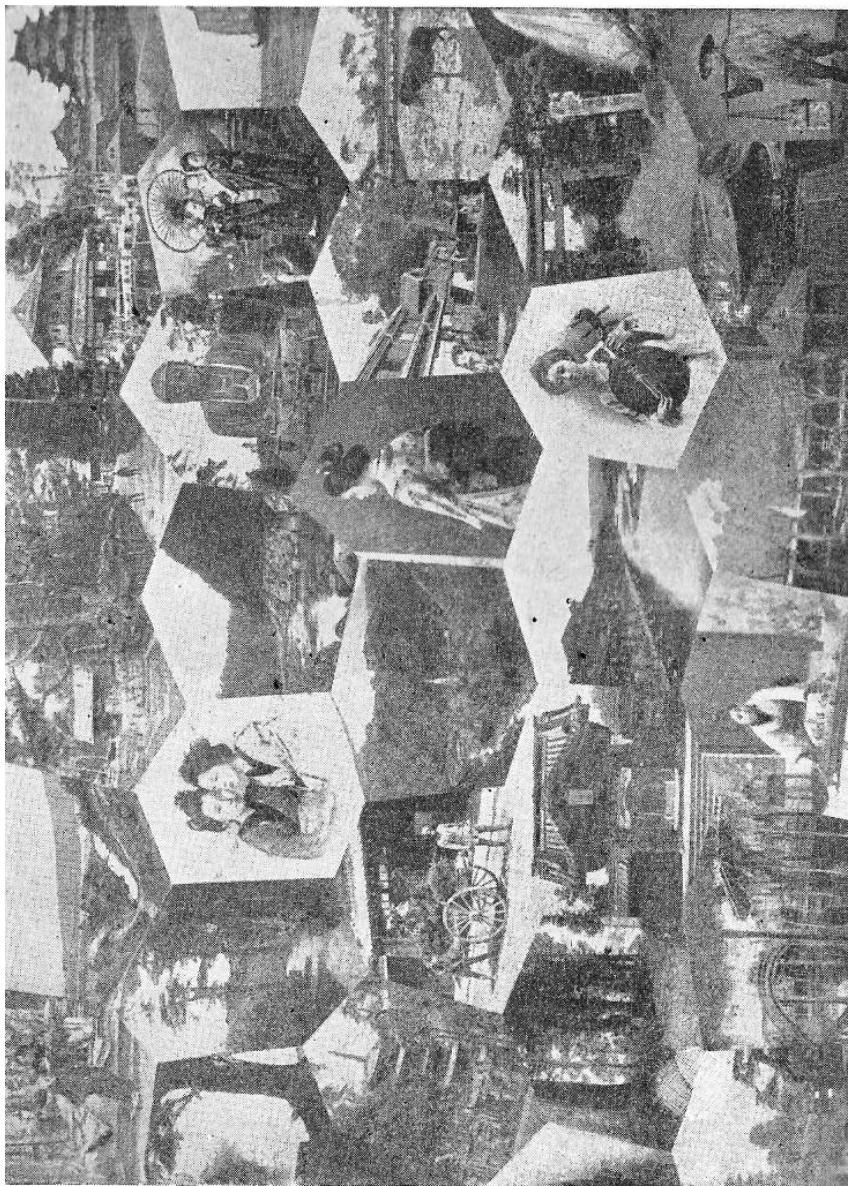
It is remarkable how the restraints between nationalities vanish when thousands of kilometers lie between the representatives and their respective home countries. They feel more like brothers and sisters of a single, large society. One's vision

clears and one's horizon widens. The artificially made ice between nations that at home may look like impassable glaciers melt by nearer acquaintance and the warm feelings of friendship.

An infantry regiment is drawn up in the front with its music corps in the middle. Dark masses of all kinds of weaponry are seen in the background. Staff officers in dazzling uniforms run to and fro; they are having a busy day. The critical eyes of many nations will soon be directed at the pride of Japan – the army's elite corps. Wonderful weather, cool clear air.

The music corps strikes up. It is the old national anthem, indicating that the *mikado* is near. The avant-garde gallops by the tent, a state coach follows. Is this *Dai Nippon's* ruler? No, it is only his uncle, Prince Arisugawa, the army's commanding general. One more coach with gold-embroidered lackeys in Louis XV style. Another prince.

But then finally an outrider appears, carrying the imperial standard – red with a chrysanthemum flower in the middle. Here we have His Divine Majesty with a 2½ thousand year family tree, and Count Itō, the prime minister. Hats and caps off! Bowing and scraping – but not a single cry of hurrah, no *vive l'empereur!* or *Hoch für den Kaiser!* It is odd that the Japanese have not imitated the Europeans in this too. Maybe it is the deep veneration felt for the throne that prevents it. Anyway, an oppressive silence rules overall. Only the solemn tones of the music are heard while the *mikado* descends from the carriage and enter the tent to greet the ambassadors. Mutsu Hito, in a French marshal's uniform with the reddish-violet



Japanese postcard.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

ribbon of the chrysanthemum order across his breast, frankly does not present an attractive appearance. One would think that his descent from 121 *mikados* – and from the Sun God – would give him an aristocratic air and a white skin color. But no, truth to tell, few of his subjects look less prepossessing than Japan's holy *mikado*.

A gentleman of the diplomatic corps, who sat by my side, remarked that the emperor had quite a resemblance to certain animals that will climb up in the trees when you clap your hands.

Those who do not know Japan's history would surely have left the country with little enthusiasm for the island empire's ruler. But the truth is that this grim sovereign with the melancholy expression in his beautiful brown eyes is regarded as one of the wisest and best *mikados* that have ever directed the fate of Japan.

The *mikado* mounts a horse followed by a French military attaché and several high Japanese dignitaries.

They trot slowly around the whole parade ground – solemn and quiet as before. When the *mikado* comes back again, he gives an order to one of the adjutants, and shortly thereafter we see large masses of infantry, cavalry, and artillery form up in columns. The outrider with the imperial standard positions himself a little outside the tent. Mutsu Hito and the little twelve year old crown prince ride up alongside of him. The music strikes up a march, and then the parade files by. First the infantry, then the cavalry, and finally the artillery. It is an imposing display – except for some of the cavalry who are mounted on mules or ponies.

I looked over at the Chinese ambassador from time to time. Thought that might possibly feel a little uncomfortable in his long mandarin's gown among the Europeanized Japanese. But no; the cold, supercilious diplomatic smile is fixed on his face as usual.

After the review, the *mikado* with ministers and generals dismounted from their horses and entered the tent, where a number of eminent Japanese and foreign consuls had the great honor of shaking His Majesty's hand. He had a long chat with the Chinese ambassador and seemed to wish to show his great neighbor's representative more than usual respect.

The state coaches drive up, and the *mikado* and the nation's great men depart the Avogavas parade ground under the solemn tones of the national anthem and the people's respectful salutation.

*

In the first 20 years after the revolution, the Japanese government's attention has been primarily directed to the army in order to be able to repel an invasion by the European powers.

The navy's turn came when some degree of security against such an eventuality had been achieved. A strong navy was necessary if Japan was to raise its prestige abroad, and especially if a fortunate outcome of a war with China was to be expected.

Japan has had a great advantage in having been able to acquire at once the newest of the new in naval armaments.

While China has only acquired 3 new warships since 1889, the Japanese fleet has been increased by no less than 10.

A special emphasis has been made to acquire fast-sailing cruisers with a large number of rapid-firing cannon.

A worthy representative for this type of warship is "*Yoshino*," which fought with "*Tsi-Yuen*" outside of Asan on July 25. The vessel was built in England in 1893, and, judging by the drawings, it is a handsome ship.

However, the battle by the Yalu showed what the Japanese fleet lacked when the war broke out. Fast-sailing cruisers may be well and good, but as warships, the Chinese armored ships "*Ting-Yuen*" and "*Chen-Yuen*" were absolutely superior.

With regard to personnel, it is not possible for me to make a judgment based on the few times I have visited on Japanese warships, but there is no reason to believe that the scientific studies among the naval officers have not been driven with the same energy as among the army officers. In any case, the naval command headquarters in Tokyo has had quite different forces at its disposal than those Li Hung-chang could command during the war.

Chapter Twenty-five

From Asan to Pingyang

The Chinese cross the Yalu River and move southward – The battle at Hwangju and General Yeh's reappearance – The Japanese land more troops in Korea – General Wei and the war chest.

We left the Japanese army under Major General Oshima, which returned to Seoul after having driven the Chinese out of their fortifications at Seiwan on the 29th of July.

Oshima stayed only a couple of days in the capital and then marched northward to stop the Chinese army detachments which had begun to move in across Korea's border.

Nearly 8,000 men of Li Hung-chang's troops had already landed south of the Yalu under the command of General Wei Ju-kuei, and on the 10th of August "*Fengtien*" or the Mukden Division crossed the river. It consisted of 4,500 men under the popular cavalry general Tso Pao-kuei. Thousands of Koreans had gathered on the riverbank by Wiju and greeted the Chinese troops with jubilation.

Tso and Wei now marched south together, and on the 13th of August they encountered the Japanese outposts near Pingyang (Pjonyang). The Japanese withdrew down toward Chungho, and the Chinese temporarily stopped in Pingyang, where thousands of young Koreans demanded to be issued weapons – a request that could not be accommodated to any great extent, since neither Tso nor Wei had any spare supplies.

The Chinese forces marched farther south on the 15th. A detachment of Japanese tried to make a stand at Chungho, but was driven to flight after a sharp resistance.

The next day Tso and Wei moved toward the city of Hwangju. Here, the Japanese had a short time earlier debarked 6,000 men protected by 13 cruisers and gunboats, and when the Chinese forces marched by, they were exposed to terrifying fire from the ships.

Since the Chinese army was not equipped with field guns that could answer the fire at as long a distance as the ships' far-reaching cannon, Tso and Wei had to make a detour in order to attack the Japanese force, which had already moved some distance eastward toward Chungho after landing.

General Tso led his cavalry against the enemy and split the Japanese army into two divisions. At the same time the Japanese were attacked in the rear by "an unknown corps" and had to retreat to Hwangju under cover by the squadron's guns in haste with a loss of ca. 1,000 men.

Where did this unknown corps come from?

From – Asan.

We remember that General Yeh had withdrawn southward to Hongju so as not to be surrounded by Major

General Oshima's army. From Hongju he began a bold march with ca. 3,000 men to the east and then north along Korea's forest-clad mountainous east coast supported by the local people, who supplied him with provisions and guides.

From time to time Yeh encountered Japanese who had strayed too far from the capital under the impression that General Yeh still were in the south. The corps was in the vicinity of Chungho after marching for 20 days and having covered ca. 400 kilometers.

When he heard that the main Chinese force had moved west to Hwangju, Yeh followed after it and arrived in time to give his comrades a hand with his 8 field-guns, which he had hauled with him from Asan with much difficulty.

His corps had been reduced to just ca. 1,600 men along the march.*

General Yeh's daring march belongs among the few achievements the Chinese army can be proud of during the war, and he also received the emperor's full gratitude.[†] A proclamation in the Peking Gazette for the 26th of August stated:

"We are of the opinion that Yeh Chih-chao has carried out his duties in an exceptionally satisfactory manner. In recognition of this, we command that \$20,000 be sent for distribution among his officers and soldiers. Likewise we order Yeh to prepare a list of the men who died fighting for the motherland, as well as a list of those who have rendered

* General Yeh's reappearance caused considerable astonishment, since the Japanese and the telegraphic news services had buried him at Asan.

[†] Perhaps more than he deserved, since it is said that it was his second in command, General Nieh, who contributed most to the fortunate outcome of the march.

meritorious service, such that we as soon as possible can prove to them our gratitude."

At the same time General Yeh was appointed commander of the Chinese army in Korea. But this turned out to be a poor choice.

After the battle at Hwangju, he moved his exhausted corps north to Pingyang to rest after its exertions, which was well deserved. But he ought to have carried out his duties as generalissimo as well.

When his colleagues proposed to erect batteries on the heights and in the passes that led to Pingyang, he replied that it was not necessary. The Japanese could never get that far, if they only defended Chungho to the utmost.

But Yeh would soon find out different. The Japanese had already prepared a plan for throwing the Chinese out of Pingyang. In the middle of August 12,000 men were landed at Fusan, 7,000 in Gensan on Korea's north coast, and ca. 8,000 in Chemulpo.

The Fusan army under Lieutenant General Nodzu at once marched north to Seoul and joined the troops that were left there.

Altogether, by the end of August, the Japanese army totaled ca. 38,000 men – nearly 4,000 had fallen or been wounded during the earlier battles.

The main force of Oshima's corps had meanwhile had difficulties in halting the Chinese forces advance. On the 23^d of August they had already reached Kaisong, but then they had to retreat – from lack of food.

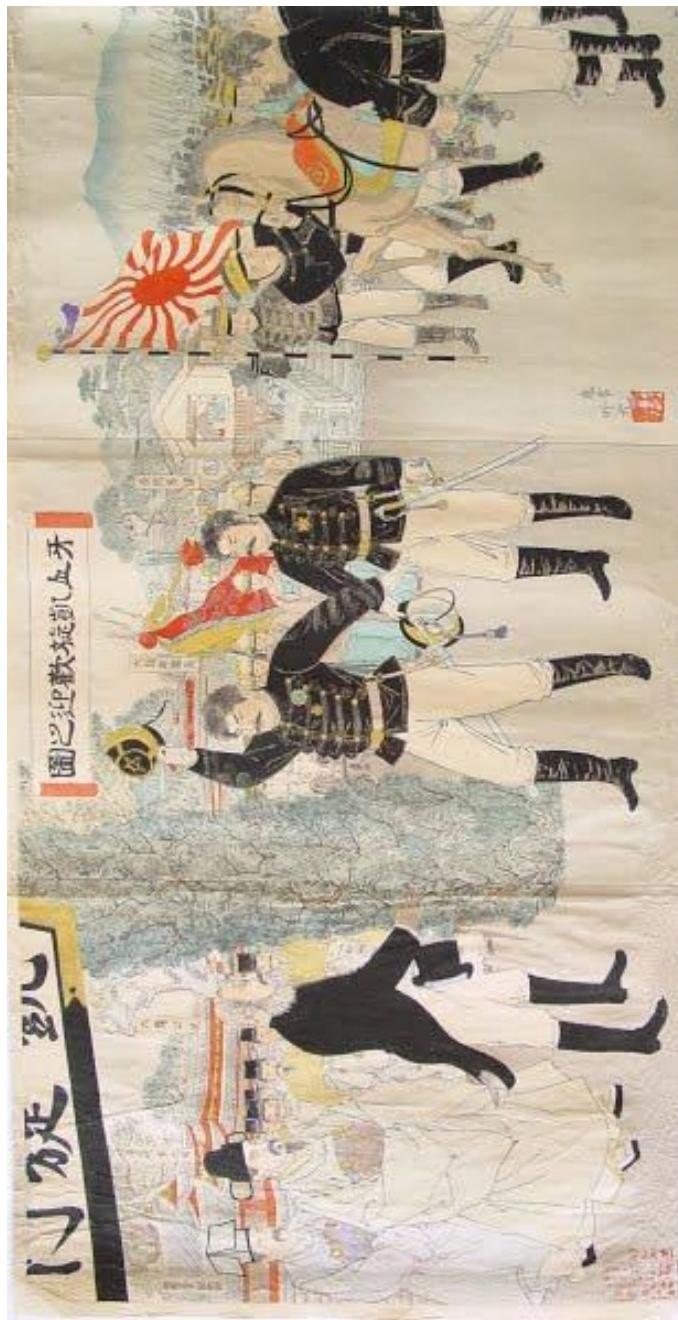
This sounds a little odd after the reception General Tso and his troops got on their arrival at Wiju, but unfortunately

General Wei's troops had behaved so brutally toward the Korean farmers that they fled from house and fields as soon as the Chinese approached.

This was General Wei's own fault. When he in Tientsin took over command of the troops that Li Hung-chang sent to Korea, he was also given the army corps' pay for 3 months. The soldiers were paid for one month in advance from this, but Wei left the remainder of the campaign funds in Tientsin under the alleged reason that it would be too risky to take so much money over to Korea at once.

As could be expected, his soldiers began to grumble when they were not paid. They had to have food, and so it went hard for the farmers, though the officers did what they could to maintain discipline.

A Manchurian corps, which mainly consisted of recruits from the half-civilized Sitan tribes in northern Manchuria, also contributed to scare the native population away. Thus it was not in the least to wonder that the Chinese came to be lacking provisions.



A couple of Japanese generals' solemn meeting in Seoul with Mr. Otori,
who is accompanied by the new Korean cabinet ministers.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

Chapter Twenty-six

The battle at Pingyang

However, the Japanese moved closer and closer to Pingyang. Marshal Yamagata, who had been appointed commander of the whole army, arrived in the theatre of war in early September. It was he who had proposed the plan for besieging the Chinese in Pingyang, and the precision and timeliness by which the several detachments reached their assigned positions was a strong testimony to the new field commander's competence and wide knowledge of the local conditions.

On the 10th of September General Nodzu crossed the Tatung River near its mouth and marched north. The major generals Oshima and Tachimi several times encountered small detachments of Tso and Wei's troops, but since they got no help from Yeh, who considered himself quite safe in Pingyang, the Japanese reached their assigned places at the specified time and with no serious losses.

When it was reported to Yamagata that Colonel Sato had arrived safely from Gensan with his corps, he gave orders for

a decisive attack on the Chinese positions for the night of September 15th.

It was now too late for General Yeh to repent of his lighthearted conduct of Pingyang's defenses, and in a council of war he proposed that the Chinese should retreat to the north without waiting for the Japanese to attack.



Marshal Yamagata

The brave General Tso, who had consistently emphasized the importance of fortifying all heights and passes, could not contain himself any longer and said in a very embittered tone to his commander "that any retreat was impossible, especially for Yeh, who was himself responsible for the army that the emperor had entrusted to his care being caught in such a

predicament. In any case, the Japanese occupation of Pinyang should only happen over his dead body."

Several staff officers agreed and said it would be suicidal to talk of retreat before the Japanese were driven back from the heights around the northern pass.

General Yeh found it prudent to be silent, and it was decided that 4,500 men under General Tso should take over the defense in the east, General Ma Yii-kun with 3,000 men in the west, and General Wei with his unruly, disorderly corps of 4,000 men should cover Tso and Ma's retreat, if that became necessary. Yeh took over the command of the 3,000 Manchurians, which were to constitute the last reserve – and defend the northern side in case of attack by Nodzu's corps.

The defending force including the Korean volunteers thus totaled ca. 15,000 men, which also corresponds to Lieutenant General Nodzu's estimate. The attackers therefore were considerably superior in numbers. I believe I am very near to the truth, when I estimate the total Japanese forces to ca. 25,000 men. General Yeh's proposal of retreat may therefore seem quite reasonable. The Chinese would still have been able to keep the Japanese at bay until relief arrived, if only Tso and Ma had been supported by their colleagues – but more about that later.

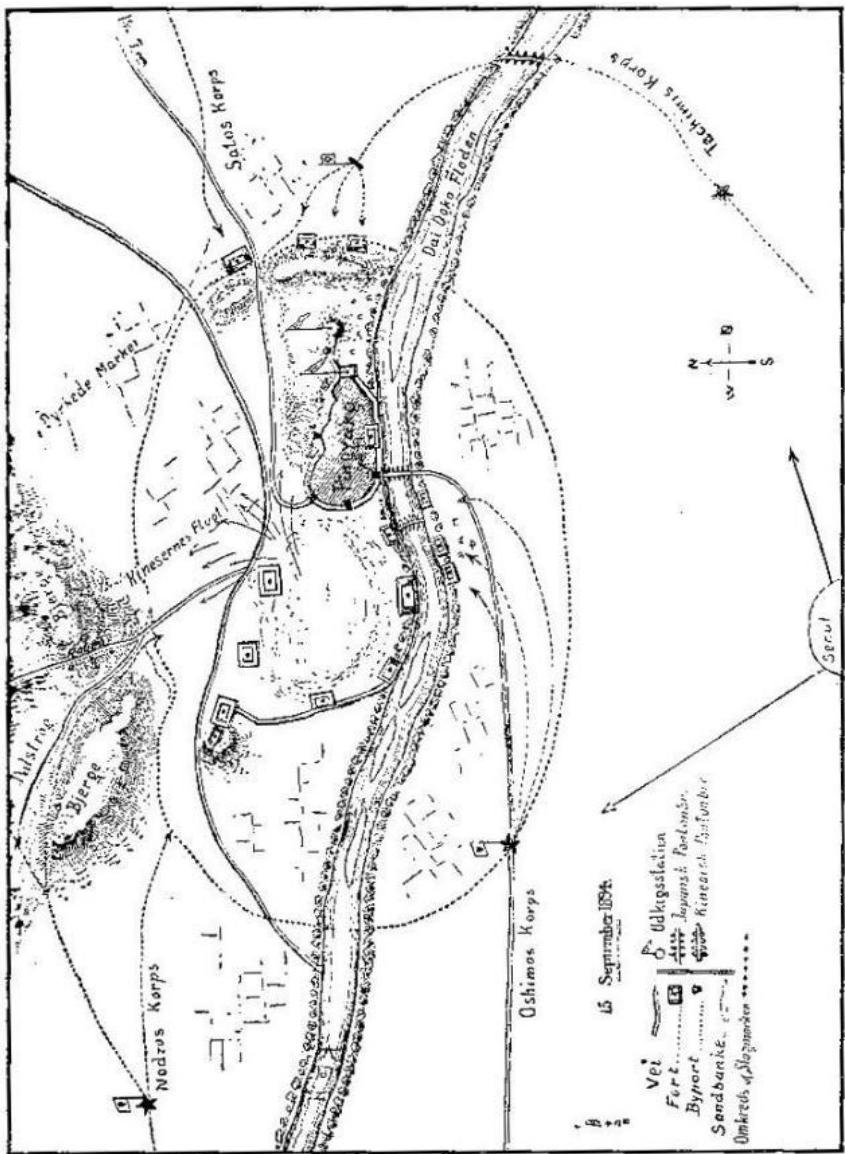
Major General Oshima, who already had had a couple of serious preliminary skirmishes on the 13th and 14th of September, began the attack against the forts on the southern bank of the river in order to divert the Chinese commanders' attention away from the east end, where Sato and Tachimi were to attack simultaneously, and where the fortifications were strongest.

Oshima divided his force into two detachments and moved against the forts. A bloody battle developed at once, and the Japanese lost several high-ranking officers, who led the advance of their troops. It took more than four hours before the first fort was abandoned.

It was still more difficult to silence the other two forts. The Chinese lay behind tall ramparts and shot their enemies down by the score. The Japanese had already begun to retreat in some disorder, when Oshima himself rushed forward against the 11th Regiment, which was in front, and standing under the flag, cried that he would rather die than yield a foot of ground. His soldiers' courage recovered, and they rushed toward the enemy, who had come out of the forts to pursue the retreating Japanese. The Chinese then retreated back behind the ramparts again, and Oshima was content with that. He temporarily suspended the attack, since his exhausted troops needed rest. It was then 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and the battle had gone on since 4 in the morning.

The reason the attack miscarried was primarily that the terrain was quite flat, which made it almost impossible to bring the field guns into suitable positions, while the Chinese could fire their Krupp cannon to good effect from the elevated forts.

At the same time, a bitter battle had raged on the east side of Pingyang. The Japanese sought to take some large forts that were located on a ridge. Sato and Tachimi attacked simultaneously from their separate directions. They were able to fire effectively from some nearby heights, and the Chinese were forced to flee from 3 forts after 5 hours stiff resistance.



The Battle of Pingyang.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

But the hardest struggle still remained. There was a steep cliff called *Moranbong* ("Peony Peak")* near the river. Here General Yeh had constructed a strong bulwark for the infantry and equipped it with several Gatling guns and Krupp cannon.

The position was attacked from three sides. Again and again the Japanese were forced back, and it almost looked as the assault had to be called off. But then the Japanese managed to get several batteries with long-range rapid-firing cannon brought up to some elevated points, and the violent rain of projectiles that now poured down over Peony Peak's brave defenders forced them give up and withdraw down from the hill.

The Japanese now advanced against the city walls.

Here they were met by General Tso's guard, who up to then had not participated in the battle. Though the Chinese are significantly overmatched in numbers, they do not give up a foot. The Japanese machine guns mow them down like wheat in the fall, but no one thinks of fleeing, since they are led by Tso himself, and all his soldiers will gladly follow their popular general to the death. He is first hit in the foot by a rifle bullet, but quickly binds up the wound with a piece of his coat and continues to lead the battle as if nothing had happened. Shortly thereafter Tso sees that the gunner on a rapid-firing cannon falls down hit by a projectile. He leaps off his horse and fires a couple of rounds himself, while he encourages his men to hold out until relief arrives.

* The famous Japanese general Konishi Yukinaga suffered a great defeat at the foot of this same cliff 300 years ago.

Then a rain of projectiles flies in across the place where the general is standing. One of them penetrates his breast – and with that Pingyang's fate is sealed.

A half dozen young men, who acted as Tso's aides, or servants, bore him out of the battle's din. They would take him to his residence inside the city, but he died before they got there.

When the soldiers heard that their general had fallen, and no relief came, the survivors quickly retreated within the walls without being pursued by the Japanese, who had to rest after 9 hours of bloody battle.

Where was the Chinese commanding general? Why did not his 3,000 Manchurians come to the rescue?

Or General Wei with his 4,000 men of Li Hung-chang's elite troops?

Well, several of the Manchurian officers had fully agreed with Yeh in the council of war the night before – retreating to the north was the only sensible thing to do – and during the intense bombardment on the forts, the Manchurian cavalry general orders his men to desert the town and gallops north leaving the Chinese to their fate.

Yeh is not able to stop the Manchurians' cowardly flight. The commanding general has lost all authority, and since he thought all to be lost, he raises a white flag of truce. His colleague, General Nieh, who had been on the famous march from Asan to Pingyang, becomes enraged when he sees that Yeh will surrender, rides up to the flag post, tears down the flag, and stamps on it, while he derides his superior officer for cowardice within the soldiers' hearing.



General Tso Pao-kuei flees.
Reproduction of a Japanese print. As we see, it has little to do with reality.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

But Yeh has a thick hide. He has the emperor's recognition for his daring march over the Korean mountains. It is sufficient. He can laugh at his colleague's charge of cowardice, he may well have thought. There is no hope here of defending the town anyway. If he cannot throw himself on his enemies' mercy, he will at least not expose himself to their rage when they storm into Pingyang. It is best to follow the Manchurians' example. He orders a company of cavalry to follow him and sets out for the north, not stopping until he gets to Wiju.

When General Wei sees General Yeh run away, he tries to win his soldiers' forgiveness by sounding retreat. In the previous night, he had been subject to a murderous assault while he lay sleeping in his tent. No wonder. He had left his war chest in Tientsin, and hunger can drive anyone mad.

So, Wei hopes to placate his defrauded soldiers by ordering a general retreat.

The weather is awful. There is thunder and lightning. Rain falls in torrents, and night is falling. Good for those who will seek safety among the mountain passes to the north!

However, while the Manchurians and General Yeh have slipped safely by, the situation has changed when Wei tries to pass with his 4,000 men.

Lieutenant General Nodzu now has occupied the passes and meets the fleeing Chinese with violent fire from his machine guns. It is not a battle – just a one-sided slaughter. These fleeing refugees, trained by European officers under Li Hung-chang's authority – the flower of the Chinese army – fall helplessly by the hundreds, because the contemptible

General Wei is their leader. *Only half of the corps survived this frightful night!*^{*}

Meanwhile, General Ma has continued the battle against the Japanese by himself, but since he gets no support and hears that his friend, General Tso, has fallen, he decides to abandon the forts, which he has defended well against the Japanese force under General Oshima.

Otherwise he may risk being surrounded by the other Japanese corps.

Some of Tso's men join him, and Ma manages to force his way through in good order. He must have chosen a route farther east than Wei, since his losses are said to have been quite minor. He reached Wiju with ca. 2,000 of his own men and 2,000 of Tso's corps. Altogether, ca. 9,000 men were gathered near Wiju a few days after the battle.

The Chinese losses have thus been 5 to 6,000 men, which I think may be distributed thus:

General Tso: 2,500 (Defender in the east).

General Ma: 1,000 (Defender in the south and North).

General Wei: 2,000 (During the flight through the pass).

The Koreans: 500 (In various places).

According to Japanese reports, 500 Chinese and 14 Koreans were taken prisoner, but several other accounts insist that these "prisoners" were only miscellaneous groups of camp followers, which then went over to the victorious side.

This account of the battle at Pinyang is derived from diverse reports from Chinese and Japanese reporters who were present at the battle. A German lieutenant of infantry,

* General Wei was later court-martialed and sentenced to death. General Yeh was luckier; he was reduced to enlisted rank for the time being.

Alfred von Müller, states in his book, "*Der Krieg zwischen China und Japan*," Part 1, the following:

"17,000 unwounded prisoners, more than 100 battle standards, a lot of cannon and war matériel fell into the hands of the victors, who had only 300 wounded and dead. Among the prisoners were all of the Chinese generals, including the top commander, General Tso. General Yeh was among the fallen. He was buried by the Japanese with all military honors.* It only lacked that the emperor of China himself had been taken prisoner, and the Chinese [Battle of] Sedan would have been complete." — — —

The victorious Japanese moved into Pinyang the morning September 16, and the official telegrams flew around the world the same day. It is presumably from these reliable sources that Lieutenant von Müller obtained his interesting information about the results of the battle.

One of the telegrams stated that "2,000 Chinese defended Pingyang. Of these, 16,000 were killed, wounded, or taken prisoner. Japanese losses are said to be insignificant." According to another report, 20,000 Chinese were said to have surrendered.

And another telegram: "More detailed reports from Pingyang state that 5 generals, among them General Tso, are prisoners. The prisoners will be sent to Japan in groups of 1,000 men."

With regard to the Japanese losses, the Japanese report that the numbers of dead and wounded were 37 officers and 597 non-commissioned officers and privates. I think it highly

* General Yeh was also buried at Asan. The telegraphic reports had him killed 3 times in this war.

unlikely that their actual numbers were not higher after the bloody fighting that raged around the forts and General Tso's brave resistance outside the city walls.* But since no more trustworthy reports are available, I will let the numbers stand.

The Japanese victory was especially due to their excellent overall command – something the Chinese completely lacked. We see from the brilliant example of unflinching courage in the face of death exhibited by General Tso's corps that *the Chinese soldiers only need a respected and popular leader in order to measure up equal to anyone*. If the top command had been in General Tso's hands, Pingyang would without a doubt have held out until the 4,500 men that were landed by the mouth of the Yalu on September 16th, had come to the rescue.

The brave cavalry general's death was a large loss for the Chinese army. An English missionary, who lived in Mukden where Tso were stationed in peacetime, wrote in a letter to North China Daily News: "General Tso's death was a hard blow for all of us up here. His soldiers grieve for him as for a personal friend. He was exceptionally charitable, and the poor in Mukden will notice this winter that their benefactor has died. Tso Pao-kuei was a knight *sans peur et sans reproche* and a faithful friend. He was a Mohammedan by faith, and the largest mosque in Mukden has let its bells ring sorrowfully out over the city."

Upon notification of the general's death, the emperor wrote to Li Hung-chang: "When the mourning period has passed, Tso Pao-kuei's 3 sons shall be given an audience so that I can bestow beneficences on them in appreciation for their deceased father's bravery and loyalty.

* These battles have been described in much detail by the Japanese themselves.

Chapter Twenty-seven

The naval battle at Yalu

The largest naval battle in modern times was fought on the 17th of September 1894 by the mouth of the Yalu River.

Many European naval officers, who were interested in the conduct of the war, have found it very odd that the Chinese fleet did not hinder the Japanese troop transports to Korea from the beginning of the war. Several gentlemen even thought that the Chinese should have blockaded the Japanese ports.

Since, what did they find by perusing the English, French, and Austrian naval directories?

Well, that China possessed a fleet that was significantly superior to the Japanese. They also found that the Chinese fleet was divided into several squadrons, but the directories did not show that these squadrons each had its own administration and command center. Further, that they stood directly under the control of the viceroy of the province in which they were stationed and for the defense of which the vessels were intended. Nor did the directories give any information about

that the viceroys in southern China had no obligation to assist their northern colleague, Li Hung-chang, without a direct order from the emperor. And such orders were not issued – except for a few ships – probably due to fears of a Japanese landing in the southern provinces.

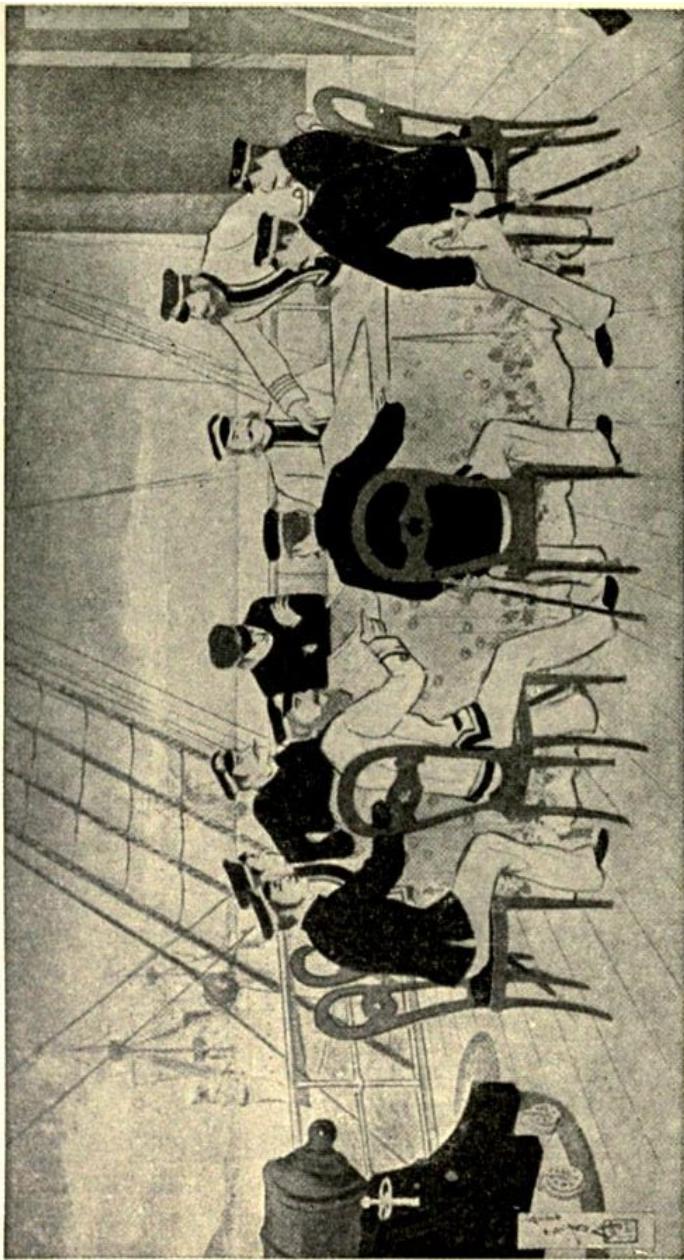
These conditions, which I have discussed in more detail in the chapter about the Chinese army and navy, ought to be noted, since several military correspondents in Europe's leading newspapers thought that it was cowardice that made the Peiyang squadron's commander, Admiral Ting, hesitate to offer the Japanese battle.

Cowardice was not a failing of this brave seaman, as anyone who knows the admiral personally will testify to. He only carried out the orders his high-level superiors gave him.

That these orders were not always distinguished by any notable degree of naval strategic wisdom, was due to the authorities in Peking meddling in matters they had no expertise in.

However, Li Hung-chang and the Peking government did agree about one thing, and that was that the Peiyang squadron, which was no match for the entire Japanese fleet, if possible ought to avoid a decisive battle, since the Japanese would hardly dare an attempt to land troops at Taku or Shanhaikuan if they had the Peiyang squadron behind them. The fate of Peking was thought to depend on the fleet – and this presumption proved to be correct. Thus Admiral Ting's cautious behavior.

But it is harder to understand why the Japanese fleet did not advance farther into the Gulf of Pechihli as soon as war was declared. They were ready and able – which was far from



Discussing strategies onboard a Japanese warship.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

the case for the Peiyang squadron. Something the Japanese, who had spies inside the naval headquarters in Tientsin, had to know just as well as the Chinese. If Admiral Itō had forced the Peiyang squadron to battle in the middle of August instead of a month later, the Japanese probably could have kept their promise of paying Peking a visit on the empress dowager's birthday, November 29th.

Not until the 9th of August did the Japanese fleet show itself by the Chinese coast. About noon Admiral Itō made a mock attack on the naval station at Wei-hai-wei. Ca. 25 rounds were fired from each side without particular effect. A shell from the forts is said to have disabled a Japanese ship, but my brother-in-law, Captain Nilsen, who was in charge of the mine- and torpedo division at Wei-hai-wei, does not believe the Japanese suffered any damage worth mentioning, since the distance was nearly 6,000 meters.

Admiral Itō probably wanted to reconnoiter, since Port Arthur was visited in the same manner in the evening of the same day.

The Japanese hardly won much by it, since Admiral Ting's fleet lay at Taku completing its outfitting. Among other things, he got on board a score Gruson machine cannon, which were badly needed. On the 19th of August Admiral Ting returned to Port Arthur and stayed there until the 12th of September despite that the Japanese sent one transport fleet after the other to Korea.

The authorities in Tientsin and Peking then finally decided that the passive stance of the Peiyang squadron had to be abandoned if the army in Korea was not to be completely overwhelmed, and Ting was ordered to cruise

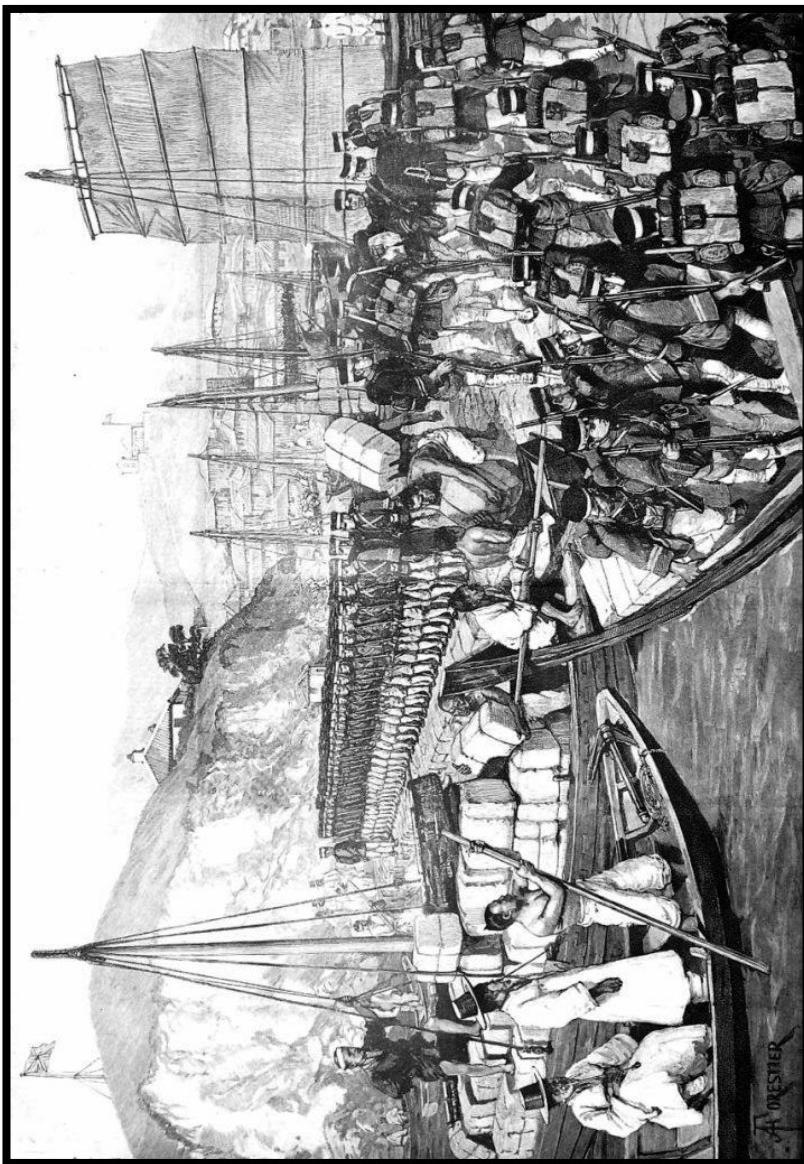
down the coast of Korea and try to snap up the Japanese transport ships. And if he had done so, he would have encountered such ships, since on the 14th of September 50 steamships from Fusan arrived in Chemulpo in a convoy protected by Admiral Itō's squadron. The transport fleet carried 10,000 soldiers, 4,000 coolies, and 3,500 horses, besides diverse war matériel.

If the Chinese had found this convoy on the open sea, these troops would hardly have been landed, since even if Admiral Itō commanded as strong a force as Admiral Ting, the transport ships would have hindered the movements of the Japanese warships.

But unfortunately, Admiral Ting did not sail eastward. A telegram from Wei-hai-wei reported that a couple of large Japanese warships cruised in that vicinity, and since a steamship with war matériel was expected at Wei-hai-wei, he first sailed down that way and stayed outside the Shantung Promontory until the evening of the 14th and then returned to Port Arthur, without having seen any Japanese ships.

In the meantime 5 transport ships had left Tientsin with provisions and ammunition for the army in Korea. They had orders to take on board 4,500 soldiers in Taliewan, and since Admiral Ting had been notified by telegraph about the Japanese siege of Pingyang, he brought the troops on board as quickly as possible.

Everything was ready by the evening of the 15th, and protected by the whole fleet, the transport ships steamed toward the mouth of the Yalu River, where they went to anchor on Sunday morning, the following day. The transport ships together with the armored cruiser "*Ping-Yuen*," the



The Japanese landing in Chemulpo

(This page intentionally left blank.)

torpedo ship "*Kuang-Ping*," and the torpedo boats "*Choi-Si*" and "*Fu-Lung*" ran into the harbor at Takushan, while the rest of the fleet anchored 10 nautical miles to the south.

Meanwhile Admiral Itō had left Chemulpo in the evening of the 14th followed by some transport ships that were headed for the Tatung River with troops, which were to march to Pingyang to reinforce the Japanese forces there. Itō left 6 older cruisers to protect the transport ships in Chemulpo.

When he arrived at the mouth of the Tatung River the next morning, he received reports that Marshal Yamagata already had begun the final attack on Pingyang. He therefore sent 3 gunboats, the all-steel cruiser "*Tsukushi*," and some torpedo boats up the river in the hope that the vessels could give the army a hand during the attack.

Admiral Itō lifted anchor again in the evening of the 16th and steered toward the island Hai-Yuen-tao to reconnoiter. When he saw no signs of Chinese ships having been there recently, he sailed north, and at 11½ o'clock in the morning, the Japanese sighted some smoke clouds by the mouth of the Yalu River.

Half an hour later Itō gave the order to "clear for action," since he could then clearly see that the smoke came from Chinese warships.

The Japanese had hardly expected it to be Admiral Ting with almost the entire Penyang squadron, since they then would not have neglected to take with them a group of torpedo boats, nor weakened their fleet by leaving the 10 ships in Chemulpo and at the Tatung River.

Reconnaissance on the whole does not seem to have been taken as seriously as modern naval warfare demands on either

the Chinese or the Japanese side. It is not improbable that Admiral Ting may have thought himself to be so well prepared for battle that the smoke from enemy ships would be seen early enough to give sufficient time to clear for action. It is said that the Chinese also noticed smoke around 10 o'clock. That the Japanese had neglected to reconnoiter probably was due to the steady inactivity of the Chinese fleet having lulled their senses to sleep.



Constantin von Hanneken

The tables on the following pages show the strength of the respective fleets.*

* I have corrected the tables up to the day of battle with the kindly assistance of English and Japanese officers. When perusing the European navy directories, it can be seen that their data sometimes do not match my numbers. Especially with regard to the most important; speed and armaments.

Den japanske Eskadre.

Type.	Navn.	Deplacement	Bart.	Løbetr af Stabelen.	Maximalpanser i cm.	Armering.	Bemændring.	Toppedoudskydner.	Skibschefer etc.
Panserdeckkrydsær	Matsushima	4 277	5 400	15.5	1891	4	12	17	6 4
do.	Itsukushima	4 277	5 400	15.5	1890	4	11	16	6 4
do.	Haidate	4 277	5 100	15.5	1891	4	11	16	6 4
Panserkrydsær	Chiyoza	2 450	5 600	17	1891	13	10	14	3 3
Kaematskib.	Fuso	3 717	3 500	11.5	1877	24	4	5	386
Panserkrydsær (Komposit)	Hiyoi	2 200	2 030	10.8	1878	12	3	4	308
Kanonbaad	Akagi	615	700	11.2	1888	—	1	2	113
Armeret Dampskib	Saito Maru	2 000	?	11	—	—	—	—	100
Panserdeckkrydsær	Yoshino	4 250	15 500	19.5	1892	10	4	8	3 5
do.	Takachiho	3 700	7 600	17.3	1885	8	2	2	400
do.	Nanwa	3 700	7 600	17.5	1885	8	2	2	365
Krydsær	Akitushima	3 150	8 500	17.8	1892	?	4	6	365
Flyvende Division.		38 623	68 730	15		17	85	107	59 32 3 367
									svært Skys. middels. furt.

Den kinesiske Eskadre.

Eight Europeans served on the Chinese ships. On the armored ship "*Ting-Yuen*": the well-known von Hanneken as Admiral Ting's advisor, Mr. Tyler, von Hanneken's secretary, Mr. Nicholls, battery commander, Mr. Albrecht, chief machinist. On the armored ship "*Chen-Yuen*": Mr. McGiffin, 1st officer, Mr. Heckmann, battery commander. On the armored deck cruiser "*Chih-Yuen*": Mr. Purvis, chief machinist. On the armored deck cruiser "*Tsi-Yuen*": Mr. Hoffmann, chief machinist.

Since Admiral Ting assumed that the different kinds of vessels comprising the squadron would have difficulties cooperating during the battle, and that signals from the flagship might be misunderstood in the dense powder smoke, he gave the ships the following general rules:

- I. During the battle sister ships, or two and two ships, shall stay together as much as possible and support each other in attack and defense.
- II. The ships' bows shall be pointed toward the enemy.
- III. All ships must generally follow the movements of the flagship.

In anticipation of a possible attack by the Japanese, Admiral Ting had left almost all the ships' boats in Port Arthur, since these would only increase the number of splinters in a battle. In this, he followed the example of the English Admiral at the bombardment of Alexandria in 1885.

Other extra precautions were also taken as the enemy approached. Thus the round, 3 cm. thick shields were removed from the gun towers, since sad experience onboard "*Tsi-Yuen*" during the battle at Asan had shown that the

shields only served to catch shells that otherwise would have passed by without exploding.

To protect the free-standing rapid-firing cannon and other exposed parts of the armaments, sandbags and sacks of coal were stacked around them, and in order to avert fire "*Chen-Yuen's*" orlop deck was flooded with water. Similar preparations were of course also made on the Japanese ships.

And then into battle!



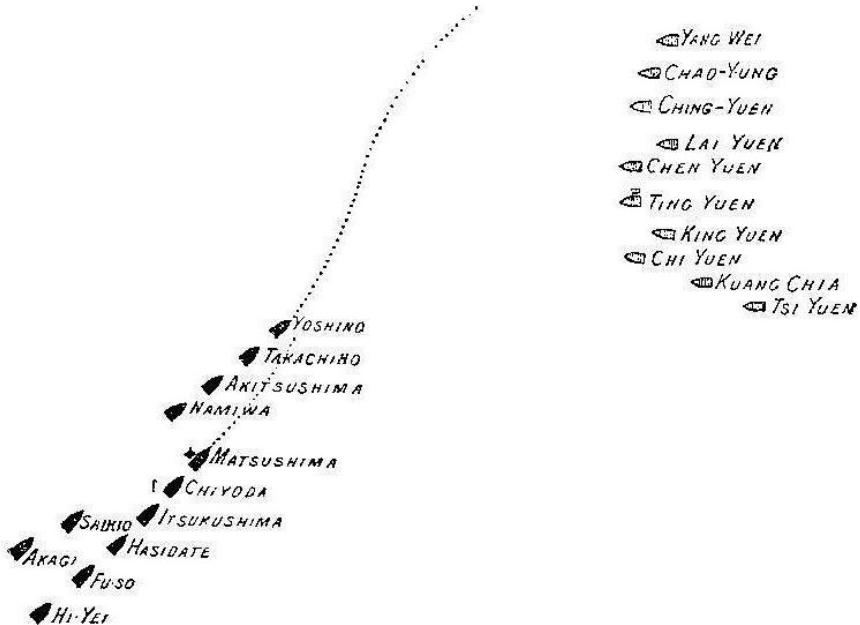
Admiral Itō



Admiral Ting

When Admiral Ting heard that clouds of smoke had been seen to the south, he immediately gave orders to weigh anchor and steered southward in 2 lines at 6 – 7 knots. The 1st division in front and the 2nd division right behind. The ships on the left flank did not get into line at once, and it therefore looked to the Japanese like the Chinese ships were arranged in a wedge formation.

Admiral Itō's squadron was divided in a "flying division" and a "main division." The ships steamed toward the Chinese in a "line of battle" with the 1st division leading.



The squadrons approach each other.

It is said that before the battle, the Japanese admiral signaled: "Dinner. We cannot fight on empty stomachs." However, the Chinese seamen had to forego their dinner.

"Ting-Yuen" fired the first shot 20 minutes past twelve o'clock at a distance of 6,000 meters. The cannon did not have enough elevation, and the shell did not reach its target. The recoil was so violent that everybody on the bridge were tumbled over by it. Admiral Ting was so badly injured by his fall that he had to be carried down to his cabin, and the

captain of the ship, Captain Liu Pu-chin, took over the command while the admiral was being bandaged up.

When the Japanese got closer, the 1st division began veering over toward the Chinese right wing, and at the same time the Japanese squadron opened fire across the whole line at ca. 3,300 meters distance.

One of the first shells destroyed all of the signaling apparatus on "*Ting-Yuen*" and killed the operators. This largely ended the communications with the other ships, and the Chinese captains had to act on their own judgment and Admiral Ting's 3 general orders.

At the same time as the Japanese began to veer right, the Chinese right flank also began to turn, but got a little out of order and was exposed to such intense fire that "*Yang-Wei*" and "*Chao-Yung*" were set on fire and soon afterward had to leave the scene of action.

The rearmost Japanese ships, "*Akagi*" and "*Hiyey*," which could not keep up with their faster sailing comrades, suffered the same fate. As the Chinese advanced, these two drew closer to the left wing.

The captain on "*Hiyey*," who feared being rammed and sunk if he kept on course, then decided to break through the enemy line where the interval between ships was largest. This daring plan succeeded to the extent that "*Hiyey*" got through, but the vessel was handled so roughly by the enemy's shells that it was set on fire and had to withdraw.

Meanwhile, "*Akagi*" was under heavy fire from the Chinese left wing. Its captain, Captain Sakamoto, was killed when the mizzen mast fell on him, and a couple of officers were wounded. Shells literally rained down over the ship.

Fire flamed up in several places, but "*Akagi*" still managed to slip away and put out the fires.

Both Japanese divisions had now circled around the Chinese right wing. The main division engaged the Chinese west wing from the rear, and attention was deflected from "*Akagi*," which thus managed to withdraw from the battle.



Captain Sakamoto

"*Saikio*" also had to withdraw. Onboard this armored steamship was no less a personage than the head of the Japanese navy, Vice Admiral Kabayama, who had sailed with the fleet, partly to inspect and partly to gather experience from a possible confrontation with the Chinese fleet.

Itō had directed that "*Saikio*" should stay relatively passive during the battle so that Kabyama would be better able to observe and gather useful knowledge.* But the din of the battle was too tempting for its crew, and "*Saikio*" helped its comrades as best it could. An enemy shell wrecked the steering mechanism, and when it also suffered several lesser damages, the captain decided to withdraw from the battle and managed to do so by steering with the propellers.



Vice Admiral Kabayama
Head of the Japanese navy.

The flying division had in the meanwhile turned about and circled around the Chinese right wing again, and the

* Many interesting photographs were taken during the battle.

Chinese thus came under fire from two sides. The Japanese executed these evolutions with such expert competence that it evoked the Chinese captains' unanimous admiration.

A hot artillery battle flared up on the Chinese left wing. "*Yoshino*" was set on fire by shelling from "*Tsi-Yuen*" and "*Chen-Yuen*," but several ships from the main division came to her rescue, and they managed to cut "*Kuang-Chia*"* and "*Tsi-Yuen*" off from the other ships. Both of them escaped and did not return to the action.

"*Kuang-Chua*," which had not been damaged by enemy fire to any extent worth mentioning, set course for Port Arthur, but its inept captain must have kept a closer watch for the enemy to his rear, since in the night he ran onto a reef that lies ca. 20 nautical miles east of Talienshan.

Nor did "*Tsi-Yuen*" have any more of an excuse for leaving its comrades. After 30 rounds had been fired from the aft cannon (15 cm.), the mountings came a little loose. At the same time, the turning mechanisms on the two cannon towers forward went out of order, and so Commander Fong thought it was no use to continue fighting with machine guns alone. But instead of withdrawing out of firing range and trying to get his large guns functional again, he decides to follow "*Kuang-Chia's*" example, and unfortunately sets course for "*Yang-Wei*" and "*Chao-Yung*," which have gotten into far too shallow water, while their crews have had their attention turned to putting out the fires onboard the ships.

* "*Kuang-Chia*" and "*Kuang-Ping*" were the only ships that until then had been ordered up from the southern provinces. They could just as well have stayed there, since the Peiyang squadron was not strengthened in the least by this addition.

Commander Fong, who notices that the depth quickly diminishes, tries to change course. But this maneuver is carried out so clumsily that "*Tsi-Yuen*" runs into "*Yang-Wei*" under full steam with the regrettable result that that unfortunate ship gets a large hole in its side and sinks in ca. 8 meters deep water.

Without making any attempt to save the swimming sailors, Commander Fong continues on his westward course and reaches Port Arthur a good six hours before Admiral Ting.

This cowardly behavior by Commander Fong may perhaps surprise many of us after having read about "*Tsi-Yuen's*" battle with "*Yoshino*" on July 25th, but according to chief machinist Hoffmann's statement, it was the ship's brave first officer, Shen Shou-chang, * who led the fight until he was hit by splinters from a fragmentation shell.

"*Chih-Yuen*" also was separated from its comrades and attacked by several Japanese ships at once. Its captain, Commander Tang Shi-cheong – one of the most charming officers in the Chinese navy – maneuvered his vessel with great coolness and skill. The enemy shells holed his hull repeatedly, and when Tang could see that all was lost, he steered under full steam toward "*Yoshino*," fired his big guns, and tried to ram his opponent, but before "*Chih-Yuen*" could reach its target, it went to the bottom with all its brave crew of 250 men.

* Lieutenant Shen Shou-chang, who was a personal acquaintance of mine, was educated in America. The emperor ordered that he should be buried at the state's expense and with the military honors required for a rear admiral.



Commander Tang Shi-cheong

Commander Tang and his first officer, Lieutenant Chen, were later rescued by a fishing boat. But the loss of "*Chih-Yuen*" affected Tang so strongly that he dived overboard again and drowned.

"*Chih-Yuen*" went under at 3:30 PM. A couple of minutes earlier, the Japanese flagship "*Matsushima*" had nearly suffered the same fate. One of its officers gives us the following report in the respected Japanese newspaper, *Nichi Nichi Shimbun*:

"At the beginning of the battle, the battery commander positioned 62 men by the several cannon – but one hour later

there were only 6 men left to serve the guns. The rest were either dead or wounded. The decks looked frightful, strewn with torn-off limbs and dyed red with blood. It was mostly a shell from a 25 cm. cannon that wreaked this destruction.

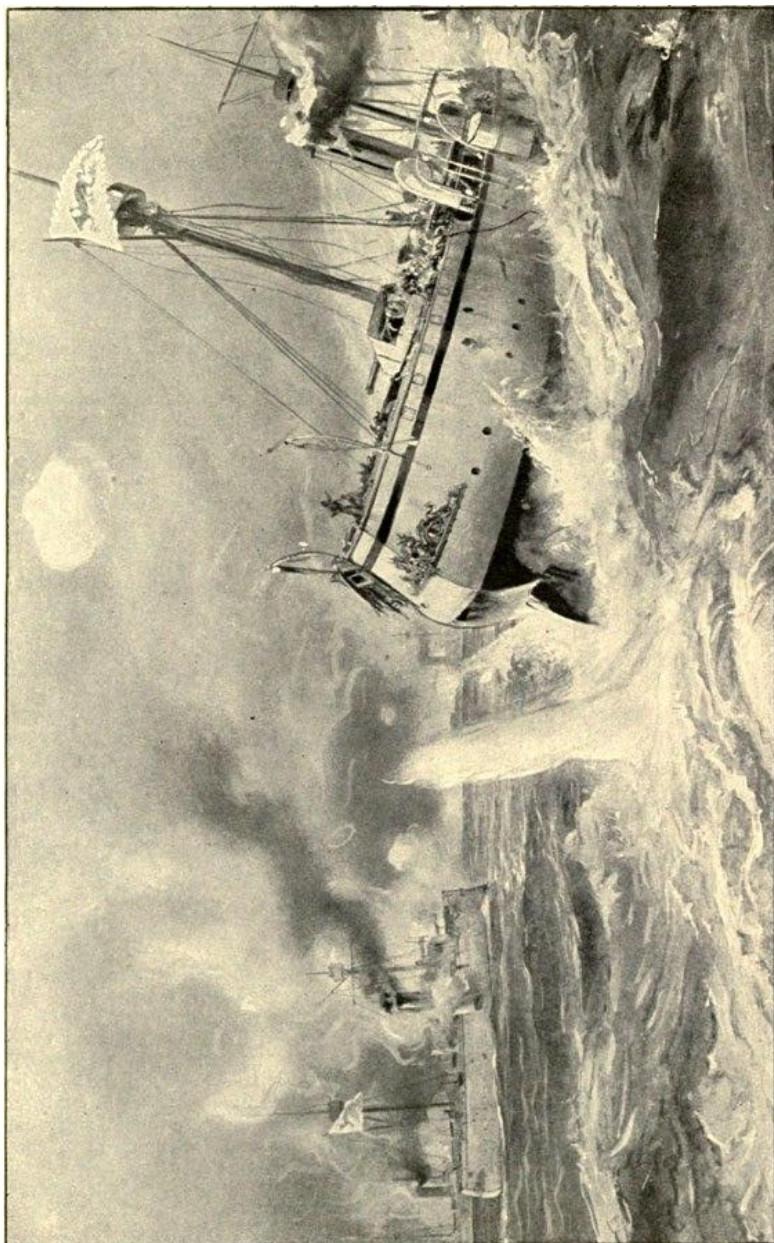
Sometime later (according to Admiral Itō's report at 3:26 o'clock) a barbette mounted cannon on the starboard side was hit by a shell from one of "*Chih-Yuen's*" 30.5 cm. guns. The explosion wreaked death and destruction to all and everything in the vicinity. The forward cabins were crushed. A fragment of the shell blew a hole in the deck. A large number of men were killed, including the battery commander, who must have been blown into little pieces, since there was nothing left of him but his binoculars and his cap. Another shell of the same caliber set the ship on fire, and though the fire was soon mastered, several men were badly burned."

Shortly thereafter the Japanese drew back a little from their enemy's fire – probably to confer about a new plan of attack, and Admiral Itō left "*Matsushima*" and moved his flag over to its sister ship "*Hasidate*." When the battle was over, the wrecked flagship was sent home to Japan, where "*Matsushima*" and its brave crew soon became objects of adulation for the whole nation.

The battle now continued in two groups: "*Ting-Yuen*" and "*Chen-Yuen*" fought the Japanese flying division, and the rest of the Chinese ships fought against the main division.

The flying division kept the battle going at ca. 4,500 meters as the fast cruisers circled around the armored ships while raining shells over them from their long-range cannon.

The sinking of "*Chih-Yuen*"



(This page intentionally left blank.)

"*Ting-Yuen*" and "*Chen-Yuen*" kept together and followed the cruisers' movements in a tighter circle and tried to get as close as possible in order to use their large guns more effectively. All the shrapnel shells had been expended, and they had to use steel shot, which did not have anywhere near to the same effect on the Japanese cruisers.

On "*Ting-Yuen*" the platform on the military mast was hit by a shell that killed the 7 men in it and took the whole mess overboard. Another shell pierced the single funnel, and a third killed Mr. Nicholls who together with the other Europeans were partly responsible for the brilliant performance of the armored ships. Near 4 o'clock a fire broke out forward on "*Ting-Yuen*" that prevented use of the farthest forward gun tower. Fortunately, the fire was soon brought under control. All woodwork on both "*Ting-Yuen*" and "*Chen-Yuen*" was burned off, but otherwise they took the fire from the cruisers with great composure.

The Chinese were not so lucky in the second battle group. Shortly after "*Chih-Yuen*" went under (3:30), "*King-Yuen*" was set on fire. Despite all efforts the crew could not suppress the fire, and the captain then seems to have followed Commander Tang's example. He tried to ram one of his opponents, but without success. The ship suddenly went under with its 270 men, of whom 70 are said to have been saved.*

Chinese sources claim that the Japanese vessel sent a torpedo into "*King-Yuen*" and followed its opponent to the bottom shortly thereafter, but I have not found anything from

* "*King-Yuen's*" captain, Commander Lin, was the same officer who commanded "*Kuang-Yü*" in the naval battle at Asan.

the other side to corroborate this. I think it likely that the fire reached the powder magazine, and the explosion has been mistaken for a torpedo hit.*

Meanwhile the armored cruiser "*Ping-Yuen*," the torpedo ship "*Kuang-Ping*," and the two torpedo boats had come out from Takushan, where they had lain since the previous day as protection for the transport ships. The flying division then turned against these ships, which did not want to get into this uneven a fight, however, but only drew farther in toward the coast.

"*Akagi*," which had extinguished the fire and repaired the worst of the damage, now returned to the fray. "*Lai-Yuen*" turned aggressively toward it intending to ram the ship, which probably would have succeeded, but when "*Lai-Yuen*" had come within a couple of hundred meters, a lucky shrapnel shell from "*Akagi*" set it on fire which quickly enveloped the ship. It had to withdraw, and "*Akagi*" was saved.

The fire is said to have raged for all of 8 hours, and it must be seen as miracle that "*Lai-Yuen's*" captain was able to bring his ship into Port Arthur the next day.

Shortly thereafter – it was then half past five o'clock – Admiral Itō gave the signal to stop fighting, and the Japanese squadron retreated to the south, followed by the 2 Chinese armored ships. After an hour, 5 of the enemy ships turned around and gave "*Ting-Yuen*" and "*Chen-Yuen*" hell, as Mr. McGiffin later expressed it.

* It may also be the case that an enemy projectile hit a torpedo that lay in the tube ready to be fired.

The Chinese now abandoned the pursuit and turned back to the scene of the battle, while the "victorious" Japanese continued on their course sailing south.

Thus ended the sea battle at Yalu, or Hai Yuen-tao, as the Japanese authorities prefer to call it. According to the official copy of Admiral Itō's report to the *mikado*, the report ended thus: "About 5:30 o'clock several ships were seen to come to "*Ting-Yuen*" and "*Chen-Yuen's*" rescue. Since the leading division (flying) had gotten rather far from the main division and the sun was setting, I broke off the engagement and recalled the leading division. Since the enemy ships steered a southerly course, I assumed they would go to Wei-hai-wei, and after having gathered my ships, except "*Hiyei*" and "*Saikio*," I steered what I assumed was a parallel course to the enemy's with intent of resuming the battle in the morning, since I thought a night battle would be unwise for us since the ships could be separated in the dark and possibly rammed by the enemy's torpedo boats. However, I lost sight of the Chinese, and when at daybreak I could not see any sign of the enemy, I returned to the site of the battle. When "*Yang Wei*" was seen stranded on a reef, I ordered "*Chiyoda*" to send a boat over and destroy its bottom with a torpedo.* The fleet returned to our rendezvous on the 19th."

These sentences, which the Japanese government has attributed to Admiral Itō in a publicized official report, I consider to be *as far from the truth as possible*.

I will not insist that the brave Japanese admiral himself has adorned his retreat with these concluding remarks. I will

* Totally unnecessary work, since "*Tsi-Yuen*" had punched a hole in its side. (The author's remark.)

rather assume that the censors in the navy headquarters has treated the admiral's manuscript much too freely from a historical point of view.

If the Japanese had returned to the site of the battle, they certainly would not have found the Chinese squadron, since Admiral Ting headed to Port Arthur a couple of hours after the battle ended. But the transport ships, which lay peacefully in by the Yalu, would have been well worth taking along. They did not leave the harbor until 4 days after the battle and then saw "*Yang Wei*," "*Chao-Yung*," and "*Kuang-Chia*" in just the same condition as the Chinese had left them.

As can be seen from the tables on pages 407 and 408, ca. 6,000 men fought in the battle; 3,767 on the Japanese side and 2,090 on the Chinese side. In recent years it has been thought that modern weapons would cause enormous loss of life in a sea battle. These expectations have not been confirmed.

According to an official report from the Japanese surgeon general, the Japanese had 90 dead and 204 wounded.* The losses were distributed as follows:

	Dead	Wounded
" <i>Matsushima</i> "	35	76
" <i>Chiyoda</i> "	0	0
" <i>Itsukushima</i> "	13	18
" <i>Hasidate</i> "	3	9
" <i>Hiyet</i> "	19	37
" <i>Fuso</i> "	2	12
" <i>Yoshino</i> "	1	11

* 32 of the wounded died later.

	Dead	Wounded
" <i>Takachiho</i> "	1	2
" <i>Akitsushima</i> "	5	10
" <i>Naniwa</i> "	0	1
" <i>Akagi</i> "	11	17
' <i>Saikio</i> "	<u>0</u>	<u>11</u>
	90	204

I have not found an official report from the Chinese side of the dead and wounded but according to the available information the losses were distributed as follows:

	Dead	Wounded
" <i>Ting-Yuen</i> "	17	25
" <i>Chen-Yuen</i> "	15	15
" <i>Lai-Yuen</i> "	10	20
" <i>Ching-Yuen</i> "	2	14
" <i>Tsi-Yuen</i> "	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
	47	74
Lightly wounded:		<u>178</u>
		252

In addition there are those who were lost when

" <i>Chen-Yuen</i> " went under:	ca. 230
" <i>Chih-Yuen</i> " went under:	" 200
" <i>Chao-Yung</i> " burned and went aground:	" 50
" <i>Yang Wei</i> " collided with " <i>Tsi-Yuen</i> ":	<u>" 100</u>
	580

Of the Europeans who fought on the Chinese side, 2 were killed and 4 more or less seriously wounded.

*

So, who won the battle at Yalu?

Based on Admiral Itō's report and several more or less reliable sources, most military authorities have up to now awarded the prize to the Japanese. I do not find any reason why I should share these gentlemen's opinion in this respect.

As we see from the tables, the Japanese fleet was significantly superior in crew strength, speed, and artillery. These advantages would seem to have balanced out the Chinese ships' heavier armor. That the Japanese showed a greater degree of discipline and maneuvering skill during the battle, is undisputed. On the Chinese side the officers' conduct in both military respects and maneuvering was very uneven. We see the most brilliant examples of bravery and competence paired with shameless cowardice and ineptitude.

The sea battle at Yalu must be said to have been a draw. Though the Chinese suffered a large loss of ships, they held the battlefield and pursued the Japanese part of the way off it. Secondly, they returned unhindered to Port Arthur after having carried out their task.

In view of these facts, the *mikado's* congratulations to Admiral Itō sound rather odd. It read as follows: "*We hear that our united squadrons have fought valiantly in the Yellow Sea and have won a large victory. It is therefore probable that the fleet will continue to dominate the enemy at sea.*

While we acknowledge Our officers' and men's services, We feel extremely grateful for the wonderful results."

The emperor of China passed out both punishments and rewards. The captains on "*Chih-Yuen*," Commander Tang, and "*King-Yuen*," Commander Lin, were given high praise and the emperor assumed responsibility for the care of the families they left behind. Several of the wounded officers were promoted and received various rewards.

On the other hand, the captain on "*Kuang-Chia*" was dismissed because he had left the battle. He surely ought to have suffered the fate of the captain on "*Tsi-Yuen*," Commander Fong. This gentleman was court-martialed a few days after the battle and sentenced to be beheaded. Partly for cowardice and partly for the poor maneuvering that resulted in the loss of "*Yang Wei*." While the other ships were permitted to wrap their cannon with symbol of victory – red cloth – "*Tsi-Yuen's*" had to remain uncovered during its stay in Port Arthur.

About the foreign officers, the emperor stated in a decree of October 23^d:

"We have received from Li Hung-chang a special communication, wherein he extols the great services that the foreign officers performed during the battle. Both the dead and the living deserve our gratitude. With regard to von Hanneken, he has already received the Star of the 1st Class within the Order of the Dragon. Let him also receive a commission as a general. Purvis^{*} and Nicholls died in the battle. Give their families 2 years full pay. Heckmann, Tyler,

* Chief engineer Purvis went under with "*Chih-Yuen*."

and McGiffin shall be decorated with the Single-eyed Peacock's Feather and the Star of the 1st Class, 3^d Division."

A scientific study of the sea battle at Yalu will doubtlessly come to interest a majority of the European naval officers and have a decided influence on the development of their respective fleets.

I do not agree with an author in *Naval Annual* who states that "it is not possible to discover anything new that the battle has taught us." Quite to the contrary, I think I have learned a lot, and I believe that many of my European colleagues in the naval services will say the same. Most of the criticisms that have appeared in the military periodicals to date hardly merit to be called scientific. They are much too partisan for that and smell too much of being written for special purposes. Also much criticism is based on incomplete knowledge of the facts.

Thus, the German Admiral von Werner in *Neueste Nachrichten* states his wonderment that torpedoes and ramming were so little used in the battle. This wonderment would presumably be stilled by reading about the tactics used by Admiral Itō.

The war in East-Asia has on the whole not been favorable for the admirers of and advocates for the torpedo. From the tables we see that the Chinese ships were equipped with 36 torpedo tubes and the Japanese ships had 32. Why were they not used? Simply because both sides feared the torpedoes would be hit by enemy projectiles while they lay ready in the above water firing tubes and thus might cause unpredictable damage onboard their own ships.

When the battle began, most of the vessels had a torpedo ready to be fired in the tubes and another ready to be loaded without an attached warhead. But when some projectiles penetrated into the torpedo rooms, it was found prudent to stow the warheads away. On several ships, such as "*Chen-Yuen*" and "*Ching-Yuen*," they even threw several torpedoes overboard – which probably was the safest thing to do with these dangerous contraptions with the many fires raging.

It is not improbable that the rapid sinkings of "*Chih-Yuen*" and "*King-Yuen*" were due to shells hitting and exploding torpedoes lying ready to be fired.

And the Chinese torpedo boats that arrived at the conclusion of the battle – of what use were they? The captains had been given orders to keep under the protection of the battle ships and attack the enemy when the powder smoke got thick. However, their repeated attempts did not go well because they were discovered by the fast Japanese cruisers before they got within firing range and had to turn back.

Through long use as reconnaissance vessels, the torpedo boats' speed had been reduced to 14-15 knots, and this fact must of course also have had an influence on the paltry role played by these boats.

I think we may safely conclude that the role of torpedoes in a battle at sea that occurs in daylight has been exaggerated by the theoretical advocates for these weapons. These battle scenes, which many may have seen in their imaginations, of masses of torpedo boats rushing about in the heat of battle and sinking the enemy's ships right and left – these scenes will forever belong to the imaginary world.

One M. D'Arthaud has given a very read-worthy critique of the battle in *La Marine Française*, but its value is significantly reduced by his lack of knowledge of the theater of operations and the available facts. In one paragraph he thus states:

"If one takes a general view of the battle, it is immediately apparent that this battle, which was fought between two squadrons, did not at all follow the true principles for a modern naval war. Admiral Ting doubtlessly believed himself absolutely superior to his opponent and therefore initiated the battle. But he surely would have served his country better if he had completed his mission and carried the troops in safety to Yalu instead of engaging in a battle.^{*} Why did he not let his armored ships take up a position in the vicinity of a strongly fortified place, to the defense of which he could also assist, and why did he not order his cruisers to the coast of Japan to sink merchant ships, block the transport of troops and ammunition, and bombard open cities?"[†]

M. D'Arthaud's article also betrays on other points a lack of knowledge of the real conditions. But I will not drag out this chapter with more remarks, since these are of much too professional nature to be of interest for a majority of my readers.

I will conclude by stating some of the lessons that the battle of Yalu seems to give in my opinion:

^{*} This is exactly what Admiral Ting had done. (The author's remark.)

[†] Merchant ships, not carrying contraband, and open cities, were not targeted during the entire war by silent agreement from both belligerent powers. (The author's remark.)

- I. Armored ships of middling size with great speed and numerous rapid-firing cannon will be the most effective battle ships.
- II. All above water torpedo launching tubes should be removed, since they are more dangerous for their own ships than the enemy's.
- III. The effectiveness of torpedo boats should not be exaggerated – but nor should their moral effect be underestimated.
- IV. All woodwork – and all other inflammable materials – should be eliminated as far as possible.
- V. All kinds of unnecessary superstructure ought to be avoided and the height of the military mast shortened* - partly to reduce the target size for the enemy's projectiles, partly to reduce the number of splinters.
- VI. Lightweight shields – from 3 to 6 cm. – ought to be given up. They have been shown to be dangerous for the gun crews, whom they were to protect. They are too weak to shield against the projectiles from the rapid-firing guns, and at the same time strong enough to make the shells explode and thus concentrate their destructive effects.
- VII. Officers' training ought to place increased weight on theoretical knowledge of tactics and practical handling of the vessels wherein the officers in question are most likely to serve in wartime.
- VIII. If one is not absolutely sure of being superior in strength, one ought not to engage in formal line of battle.
- IX. Exercises in putting out fires ought to take a more prominent place among crew exercises.

* A military mast consisting of several cylinders that can be moved up and down within each other may be the best arrangement.

Chapter Twenty-eight

Change in the Japanese program – Break between Peking and Tientsin –
The war of the press agencies – The Japanese cross the Yalu River.

The battle at the Yalu River was not only significant as a test of strength between fleets with different equipment and armor. The battle also had a large influence on the future war operations.

This accidental meeting between the admirals Ting and Itō has without a doubt changed the Japanese plans to great extent. The Japanese apparently had intended to land troops on the Yalu's west bank and thus force the entire Chinese army in Korea to surrender.

After accomplishing this strategic coup, Marshal Yamagata was to march south and take Port Arthur from the land side, while Admiral Itō with the whole Japanese fleet forced the Peiyang squadron to battle and destroyed it. Then another army corps could without risk land at Shanhakuan and march to Peking.

This daring program would hardly have been impossible. But the plan broke down when Admiral Itō met the Chinese too early and did not have his torpedo boats with him.

The result of the battle was that the Japanese ships suffered significant damage while the weakened Chinese fleet still was strong enough to prevent a Japanese landing at Shanhaikuan or Taku – Tientsin's port city.

*

The Japanese victories in Korea and the battle at Pingyang brought Li Hung-chang's innumerable critics and enemies to the fore at the Peking court. They now saw a chance to bring down the over-mighty satrap, who had always avoided the palace intriguers' arena – the concubines' happy hunting grounds – while leading the Chinese ship of state through frothing breakers and dangerous shoals. The old pilot was to be cut down to size, so that he no longer would loom so large over all the pygmies in the emperor's entourage.

Despite the empress dowager's efforts to prevent it, the old ultra-conservative bureaucrats in Peking got through an imperial decree intended to remind Li Hung-chang that he was only a subject – and not the "Son of Heaven."

The decree was dated 17th of September and read as follows:

"The *Wo-jen* revoked the treaty existing between the two countries and commenced hostilities and forced their way into Korea. Entertaining a kindly feeling toward our vassal state, we, therefore, dispatched our forces to Korea to punish our foe.

Li Hung-chang, minister superintendent of northern trade, was appointed general director in the management of our military affairs and he should have given thorough consideration of the general interests at stake, made the best possible arrangements, and satisfied all necessary

requirements. He alone was responsible for the trust imposed upon him. But he has not been prompt in the dispatch of troops at opportune times, and a long period has elapsed without successful achievements. He has failed to properly discharge the duties of his office.

Therefore, let him be deprived of the "Three-eyed Peacock Feather" and the "Yellow Riding Jacket" as a light form of punishment.* He must, however, make an effort and earnestly awake to action and give orders urging the officers in command of our forces in the various places in Korea to exert themselves, pursue and join battle with the enemy, as an atonement for the errors committed.

Kwang Hsü"

We may well imagine that the old statesman read this naïve epistle with an irritated smile. He knew that everything from his side had been done in order to preserve peace and hinder the Japanese aggression. But he stood alone with an enormous responsibility, without the authority of the imperial imprimatur, and surrounded by a horde of greedy subordinate officials and incompetent generals.

China has hardly ever been as bereft of military capacities as during the war with Japan. The Tsêng brothers, who with Gordon and Li Hung-chang suppressed the Taiping rebellion, Tso Tung-tang and Liu Chin-tang, who re-conquered Turkestan from the sons of Yakub Beg – all have mounted the dragon and gone up into the blue heavens. Li Hung-chang alone is left, overburdened with administrative and military duties on his 73 years old shoulders.

* These decorations are Chinese equivalents of the highest military honors in Europe.

But the gentlemen in Peking did not get to annoy the old lion for long. The forceful empress dowager realized well how much was at risk if her faithful friend's authority was rocked. She approached her colleague from the regency period, Prince Kung, who had lived in disgrace since 1885, and with his help succeeded in stopping the undermining of Li Hung-chang's power.

In a decree of September 29th the emperor called his uncle back with the following words:

"We have been requested by the Empress Dowager to report that Her Majesty is of the opinion that Yi Su, Prince of Kung, still is in possession of his full powers and intelligence, though he still has not fully recovered from his long-lasting illness.* It is Her Majesty's wish that Prince Kung once more enter into the service of the state, and We hereby affirm his appointment to president of the Tsung-li Yamen and the conduct of the war together with Li Hung-chang. We further confirm the permission that Her Majesty has given Prince Kung to visit Us at any hour of the day, when affairs of state demands it."

With Prince Kung's return to the government, Li Hung-chang won another faithful friend in Peking, and he could now safely ignore all petty criticisms. However, for security's sake he let the main force of his European trained troops remain in Tientsin as garrison in the Taku forts rather than sending them up into Manchuria.

*

* Prince Kung had been retired from the regency government due to "illness." (See page 324.)

After the battle at Yalu, war operations almost came to a standstill for a month.

The Japanese had more than enough to do coping with numerous attempts by Korean patriots to incite a general uprising against the conquerors, and the Chinese government was busy enlisting soldiers – or rather the dregs of society – to continue the fight against Japan's trained and disciplined army.

This breathing room was used by the European wire services to conduct a war of their own for the entertainment of their readers in Europe.



Mercy! Mercy!

Miss Japan beats Mr. China with her parasol until he lets go of the Korean vase. (Drawing by G.R. Halkett, correspondent for Pall Mall Gazette.)

It was not just small divisions of troops that these gentlemen directed. A transport fleet of 70 ships made great

news. It was reported as having departed from Hiroshima on the 18th of September with 40-50,000 men onboard and was accompanied by the whole Japanese fleet.

People in Europe, who were interested in the progress of the war, waited with tense expectation to hear where this army would land. And the correspondents did not disappoint them. The Japanese soon had landed at Shantung and were marching toward Peking; then they had landed at Wei-hai-wei. At the same time these irresponsible hacks frightened the European residents' relatives with imaginary tales of the Europeans' uncertain situations in the treaty ports – and the newspaper editors rejoiced.

It was of more consequence that Lord Rosebery tried to get the major powers to agree to a joint demand that the Japanese stop their aggression and negotiate a peace treaty – but the attempt failed, since the powers' interests at this point did not fall in that direction.

*

Meanwhile the mobilization of new troops was pushed with feverish haste in the Japanese islands. The older classes of men were conscripted, and in order to have better supervision of the 2nd Army's formation, the *mikado* traveled to Hiroshima in late September amid great acclaim.

The war had already swallowed a lot of money and still more was needed to continue the fight. The *mikado* therefore gave orders for calling an extraordinary parliament, which was to assemble in Hiroshima on the 13th of October. At the same time martial law was declared; probably to ward off an uncooperative parliament at so serious a moment in the island empire's history.

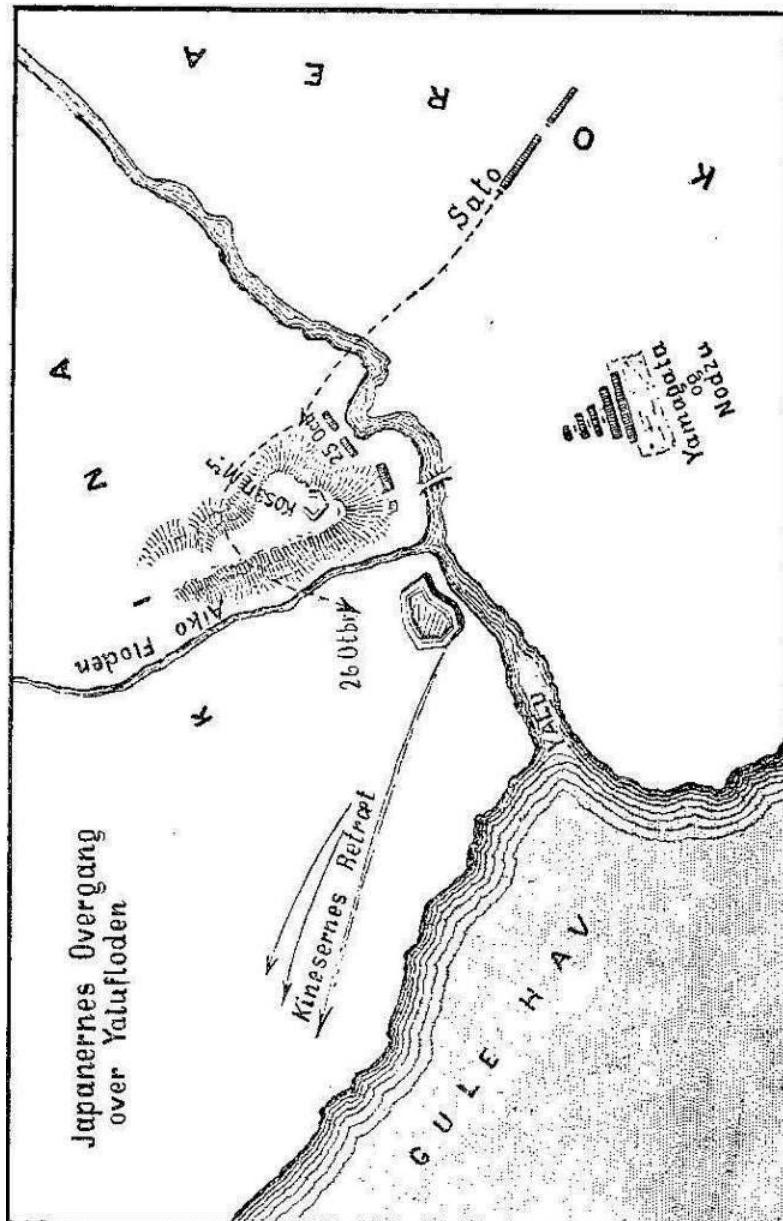
This preventive measure seems to have been rather superfluous, since the favorable progress of the war brought almost all opposition to the Itō government to fall silent.

In the middle of October, the Japanese began to stir again. The army in Korea had now been brought up to ca. 50,000 men, and the Chinese, who had been apprehensive about being attacked from their rear, found it best to withdraw across the Yalu, leaving Korea in Japan's unchallenged possession.



The *mikado's* arrival in Hiroshima

As a cautious general, Marshal Yamagata waited on the Korean side of the river until the whole army had been brought up, since by all conventional standards, the Japanese had to believe that the Chinese would make every effort to make their crossing hard won, since the terrain is especially favorable for those who are to defend the west bank of the river, where high ridges rise steeply up from the water.



The Japanese cross the Yalu River.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

However, Yamagata had ascertained by reconnaissance that these natural barriers could be bypassed by crossing the river ca. 25 kilometers above Wiju. The Japanese engineers threw a pontoon bridge across the river at this location, and in the morning of October 25 1,500 riflemen under Colonel Sato marched over without meeting any resistance worth mentioning.

By noon the Japanese came across a half-finished fort. The garrison, which consisted of only 4 – 500 men, fired their rifles and retreated to the fortified village Kosan, or Hushan, leaving a couple of field guns to the enemy. Sato followed and in the evening encamped north of the village.

The next morning the main force of the Japanese army crossed just above Wiju and immediately marched against Kosan, while Sato attacked the village from the north.

According to Japanese reports, the garrison had 3,500 men. The battle lasted 4 hours, and though nearly 20,000 were engaged, the reported losses were only 250 casualties on the Chinese side and 70 Japanese.

The Chinese now retreated across the Aiko River. At dawn on the 26th the Japanese followed after them and prepared to attack Kiudlense, or Chiulenchêng, from 3 sides.

But the Chinese, who presumably had anticipated something of the kind, had already left the town so as not to be encircled by the enemy's superior forces, and when the Japanese attacked, they met no resistance whatever.

22 cannon and some provisions was all that they left behind in their flight.

And from now on, the Japanese had a firm foothold in Manchuria.

Chapter Twenty-nine

The conquest of Port Arthur

When we look at the map of the theatre of war, we immediately see that the narrow tongue of land that sticks out into the Bay of Pechihli and almost close off the approach to Tientsin is of extraordinary strategic importance.

It was this peninsula that the allied Western powers chose as base of operations when they made their legendary march to Peking in 1861.

Li Hung-chang could not have chosen a better shelter for his new fleet than the magnificent harbor found on the south-eastern point of the peninsula.

The work on constructing the navy facilities at Port Arthur – or Port Li, as it was later renamed in honor of the viceroy – began in 1881, and in 1884 the fortifications were already so significant that Admiral Courbet during the Tonkin War thought he would need 16,000 men in order to take possession of the port.

Since then Port Arthur has grown into one of the world's strongest fortresses and when the war broke out was con-

sidered both by me and any other European officer who has visited the place to be almost impregnable.

We could hardly dream that an old experienced warrior like Li Hung-chang could be so fatally wrong in the choice of the men who were to defend China's most important fortress and one of his own proudest achievements.

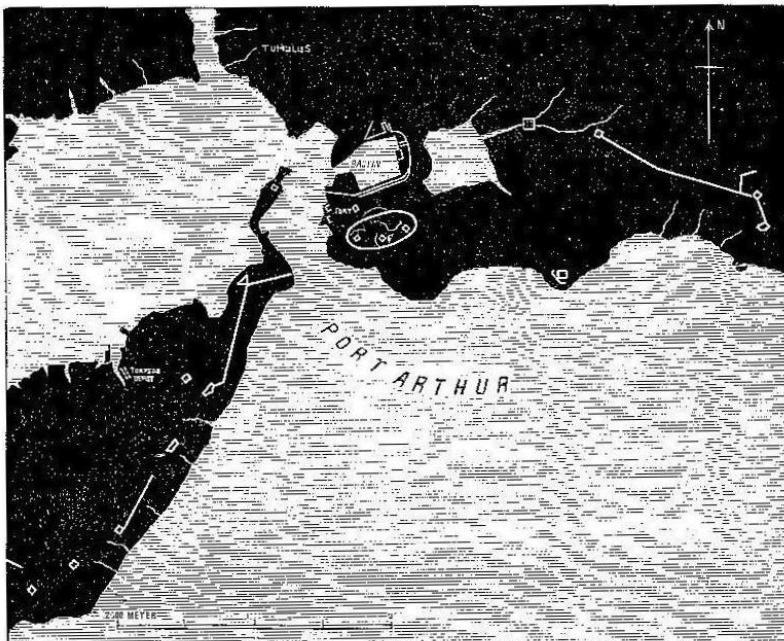
At enormous cost, Port Arthur was furnished with magnificent wharves for repairs as well as construction of new warships. Two dry-docks built by French engineers, alone cost 10 million francs. An arsenal, a torpedo depot, magazines, and the most modern shops with the best machinery – everything that money could buy was provided to make Port Arthur a naval base of the first rank.

The entry to the harbor is very difficult, since the narrowed passage is only 35 meters wide. The channel itself can be closed with 2 rows of mines, and after English and French engineers built 8 strong forts on both sides of the narrow passage, we must consider any access from the sea side to be impossible.

The fortifications, which lie on elevations up of to 180 meters above sea level, have much in common with those at Gibraltar, since these are also mainly tunneled into the mountains.

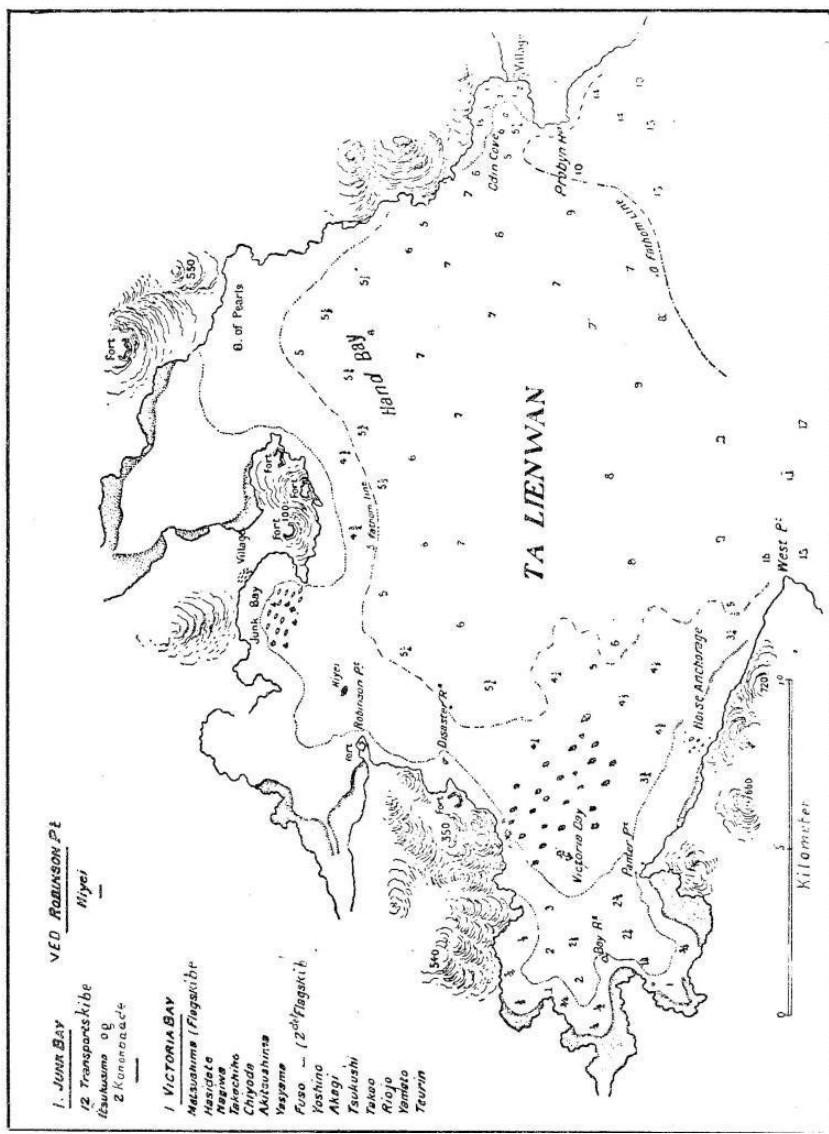
The rotating armored towers of the most modern construction and equipped with huge Krupp cannon make Port Arthur simply an ideal fortified harbor. When I visited the port, I always enjoyed viewing these magnificent works, which the sentries were always happy to show with justifiable pride.

Little did I then imagine that its defenders later would later surrender these wonders to the Japanese for a give-away price. Writing these lines, I become almost enraged at the thought of these cowardly commanders.



Port Arthur

The defense of the naval base from the landside could have been more extensive, but the long row of clay earthworks and forts, which stretched almost across the peninsula, should still have been capable of holding back a respectable army. They were constructed under von Hanneken's supervision and were like the sea forts connected to each other by tunnels, telephone, and telegraph. To further ensure the security of the naval base, construction of a railway line



The Japanese fleet and some transport ships' anchorages [in Dalian Bay] in mid-November.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

to connect Port Arthur to the 2 army bases at Mukden and Tientsin was begun a couple of years ago.

I need hardly point out the importance for the Japanese to come into possession of Port Arthur. Especially since their fleet had to operate in an area that lay ca. 1,200 kilometers from their own naval yards.

It was to conquer this strategic point that the army that gathered in Hiroshima under the *mikado's* and parliament's eyes was destined.

On the 19th of October 50 transport ships were seen to steer out of Shimonoseki's harbor with the people cheering. On this huge fleet there were 25,000 men under the command of the war minister himself, Marshal Oyama. Before any human being had time to make up his mind about the destination, the telegraph reported that the transport ships had come to anchor in a small bay near Talienwan* protected by the Japanese fleet.

On the 24th of October – the same day that Colonel Sato crossed the Yalu River – the disembarkation of the troops began. Since Oyama intended to cut Port Arthur completely off on the landside, he let some transport ships carry a couple of brigades around the peninsula to Society Bay. Here too the disembarkation was accomplished without the least opposition from the Chinese side. The telegraph wires were cut, and Port Arthur's connections to the outer world was almost completely severed, since Itō blocked the entrance to the harbor.

So as not to be surprised by a possible attack from his rear, Oyama also sent some companies northward to Fuchow

* 60 kilometers northeast of Port Arthur.

and by means of cavalry patrols arranged sort of a connection to Marshal Yamagata in Manchuria.

On the 6th of November the Japanese began to move forward on both sides of the narrow isthmus. 2,000 Chinese in the city of Kinchow under General Hsü Pang-tao had to retreat southward after several hours of stiff-necked resistance with a loss of 500 men.

The forts at Talienvan, which had a garrison of 3,000 men under General Tsao Huai-yi were attacked from the rear and of course could not make much resistance against the superior forces of the enemy. After a very weak attempt, the general abandoned all the forts to the Japanese and retired down toward Port Arthur.

Here everything was in the greatest confusion. According to Chinese custom, the top civil administrator at the naval base should also take over direction of the defense. Port Arthur's harbor captain, Mr. Calder,* had called Li Hung-chang's attention to this unfortunate arrangement and had recommended that he entrust the whole responsibility for defense to Admiral Ting. This, of course, would have made the most sense. *Shore fortifications should always be under the command of a naval officer. The European countries that still have not realized this will sooner or later come to suffer the consequences.*

Unfortunately, Li Hung-chang found that it would be too difficult to change over the command of the 8,000 man strong garrison. Not to mention the jealousies that such a step would awaken – and Port Arthur went to meet its inescapable fate.

* The only European at the naval base.

It was impossible for the civil commandant, Kung *Taotai*, to get the generals to cooperate with each other. Disagreements and jealousies made their enemy's task easier, and when Kinchow and Talienwan were taken, Kung found it best to confer with his highest superior, Li Hung-chang, about the state of things.

The commandant quietly left Port Arthur the night of the 8th of November without being discovered by the Japanese cruisers. He made it safely to Tientsin, but here he found little sympathy. Li Hung-chang thought that Kung ought to be responsible for Port Arthur. He had been several years on the station and ought to have knowledge of his subordinate generals' fitness for service. Now it was too late to send new men there, and Kung was ordered to return to his post as quickly as possible.

He got back to Port Arthur on the 12th, again without the least difficulty, which shows that the Japanese did not maintain an especially effective blockade from the sea side.

Meanwhile the commandant's absence had been the signal for great disorder. The soldiers, who believed that Kung *Taotai* had run away, immediately broke into the base offices and cleaned out the contents of the money safes. The commandant scarcely managed to re-establish order. He called a council of war immediately after his return, but none of the generals could present a practical defense plan except General Hsü, who had defended Kinchow. He proposed that most of the garrison should immediately be ordered to march north to defend the narrow mountain passes leading down to Port Arthur and offered to lead with his men against the advancing Japanese. But when the other gentlemen did not

seem very enthusiastic about volunteering their skins, it was not possible to bring any unity to the defense.

Meanwhile the Japanese had moved very cautiously southward. They could hardly have dreamed that the Chinese would not offer them serious resistance in the difficult mountain passes, which should have been the key to defending the naval base. The northernmost pass, Namkuanling,* in which with no exaggeration a force ten times larger than the one the Japanese had, could have been stopped, was traversed on November 9th after only a short fight.

10 days later the whole enemy army stood only a few kilometers from the navy base.

In the early morning of November 20th, the whole Japanese army moved forward on the Chinese outposts, while the fleet steered a course close to the coast and following the troop movements.

The plan of attack was prepared in the smallest details and punctually followed. Several rows of mines were laid around the forts, but the Japanese marched forward every cautiously, and the defenders in their nervous excitement exploded them too soon, so that they caused no damage, and by late evening the Japanese were in possession of all the land forts.

The attack continued the next morning with undiminished energy. Slowly but surely the Japanese columns moved toward the sea forts, while the fleet did its best to divert the defenders' attention.

* Namkuanling is formed by two mountain chains that run parallel with each other for ca. 2 kilometers between Society Bay and Talienwan.

The ships kept constantly moving, while firing off an occasional round now and then.

In the afternoon there was an unusually strong rainstorm, and Itō used this opportunity to send 10 torpedo boats straight into the inlet protected by a couple of cruisers.

Before the Chinese have time to push the buttons on the wires to the mines, the torpedo boats were inside the harbor and fired a hail of projectiles from their machine cannon.*

This amazing piece of daring had a great moral effect on the forts' garrisons, and also pressed hard from the land side, the Chinese generals soon seem to have had enough of the fighting.

As dusk the Japanese saw hundreds of soldiers stream out of the strong fortifications. At first they opened their ranks and let the Chinese pass unhindered, but when several badly mutilated corpses of their comrades that had been taken prisoner were discovered, it became impossible for the Japanese officers to maintain discipline. Out of their minds with rage the soldiers began a general massacre, which mainly struck the shop workers and their families, since most of the defending soldiers had already passed by.

Everything alive that got in the way was made to feel the rage of the soldiers bent on revenge. Even women and children were spitted on the bayonets. It was like a replay of the gruesome scenes from the Franco-German War.

* That the torpedo boats were not sunk by cannon fire may seem incredible, but for those who know how difficult it is for land based artillery to shoot at a moving target, the result is quite understandable. Accurate aim at a moving target is only possible for a trained sailor's eye.

Only nightfall ended this ghastly final act of the Japanese military's brilliant feat of arms.

It may give rise to some wonder that the Japanese have not bothered to take their enemies prisoner in this war. They have usually left the roads open for those who would like to make use of them.

This tactic is employed so as not to be obliged to feed a sorry bunch of soldiers that the Chinese government would be only too happy to be quit of, since, as I have several times mentioned, no Chinese citizen will enlist in the despised military unless hunger forces him to it.

The Japanese have all the beggars and felons they need back home in their own country.

The loss of life in the conquest of Port Arthur's was relatively very small. The Chinese are said to have nearly 1,000 dead and wounded; the Japanese 300. It seems incredible, almost as a fictional story, that one of the world's strongest fortresses was delivered to an enemy for so cheap a price.

And it is beyond understanding that Kung *Taotai* did not give orders to destroy the cannon and all of the costly naval establishment rather than let it be surrendered to the enemy in useable condition.

All the responsible individuals managed to escape with the exception of the brave General Hsü, who fell in the battle.

Kung *Taotai* himself with a secretary and some servants slipped out of the harbor in a small fishing boat and reached Chefoo after four days sailing. From here he traveled by steamship up to Tientsin to ask Li-Hung-chang to intercede for him with the emperor.



The day after the capture of Port Arthur.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

For old friendship's sake, the viceroy was moved to propose to the government in Peking that Kung only should lose his rank and honors, but His Majesty did not find so mild a punishment to be an appropriate equivalent for Port Arthur's loss, since in a decree of 17 December he stated:

"Upon being advised of the fall of Port Arthur, We commanded Li Hung-chang to look into whether *Taotai* Kung Chao-yu, director of the arsenal and the naval yards, has been guilty of desertion, or has by his conduct caused panic among his subordinates. Li Hung-chang has thereafter sent Us a report, wherein he recommends that We dismiss the said *Taotai*, but allow him to stay in the army and try to atone for his delinquency with good behavior. We find, however, that We should reject this request. Kung has been commandant at Port Arthur for many years and should not have neglected to take the necessary measures to defend it against the *Wo-jên*. Nor did he attempt to lead his subordinates in a forceful defense against the enemy. Instead he fled to Chefoo as soon as the enemy had entered the place. We therefore consider dismissal to be much too mild a punishment and command that he immediately be arrested and sent to Peking. With regard to the generals who commanded the several brigades, We do not know where they now are, but We command that they be sought out and investigated. As for the cowardly commandant over the forts at Taliewan, Tsao Huai-yi, We have already issued orders for his arrest and trial. Li Hung-chang is hereby ordered to apprehend this officer and send him to Peking."

Despite the emperor's strict orders and commands, I strongly suspect they were not obeyed to the letter.

On paper, many strange and gruesome things happen in the Celestial Empire, and it is from the written stories that most Europeans form their opinions about conditions out there. But *reality is something quite different*. General Wei, who cheated his soldiers of their pay and thus greatly contributed to the defeat at Pingyang, I have twice found executed in "*The Peking Gazette*." I assume they got him the last time, but I am far from sure.

If such honored gentlemen have good friends among the higher officials, the authorities can command this or that, and whatever, but the offenders are nowhere to be found.

What was the Chinese fleet doing while all this was going on? Why did Admiral Ting allow the Japanese transport ships unhindered passage to Taliewan? Many Europeans wondered about that when the news came about Port Arthur being besieged.

A month after the battle at Yalu, both fleets were repaired sufficiently that they could head out to sea – but with the significant difference that Admiral Itō's squadron was twice as strong as Admiral Ting's. Attempting to block the Japanese landing at Taliewan therefore would in all probability have ended with the total destruction of the Peiyang squadron.

When the siege began, Admiral Ting went up to Taku with his ships to confer with Li Hung-chang in person. Both gentlemen presumably found it best to preserve the ships as long as possible, since the Japanese following the fall of Port Arthur might decide to march on Peking – *and the capital was more important than Port Arthur*.

But enough of this. The Chinese fleet returned to Wei-hai-wei, where it had been stationed after being repaired at Port Arthur.

The armored ship "*Chen-Yuen*" ran aground while entering the narrow inlet and a large hole was punched in the outer hull.* Rear Admiral Lin, who assumed the vessel was destroyed, committed suicide, and China thus lost one of its best naval officers.

This personal responsibility that the Chinese government places on the shoulders of their top officials also came close to bereave the fleet of its brave commanding admiral as well. The Peking government, which of course had no understanding of maritime defense matters, thought that Admiral Ting should have been able to block the Japanese landing at Port Arthur and considered dismissing him. But the fleet's foreign officers protested in a body and informed Prince Kung that they would immediately leave the service if Ting was bothered in any way whatever. This helped, and the brave sailor's services for his country were still preserved for a while.

The fall of Port Arthur was a hard blow for the Chinese colossus and will possibly have significant influence on Asia's political history, since still – several months after the war's end – the Japanese are in possession of their bounty. *And as long as they keep it, they have set a boom before Russia's ambitious plans.*

* "*Chen-Yuen*" was not able to go to sea again until early January.

Chapter Thirty

The empress dowager's birthday – The audience protocol question and its solution – Custom director Detring's unsuccessful mission to Japan.

While the Japanese were besieging Port Arthur, the whole Chinese nation celebrated the empress dowager's birthday on November 7th with more enthusiasm and pomp and circum-stance than one might expect in such trying times.

But outside of the treaty ports only a fraction of the people knew much about the war. That the emperor and Li Hung-chang had some kind of quarrel going with the despised *Wo-jēn* in the vassal states – outside the Great Wall – most Chinese did not it find to be a good reason for delaying the long prepared festivities. Only in Peking was the birthday celebrated quietly in accordance with the empress dowager's own wishes.

Among the presents, that from the European ladies caught Her Majesty's special attention. It was a Bible in the Chinese language. She thanked them in an official notice for their well-meant gift and in return had the committee members presented with a lot of magnificent silks and embroideries.

As evidence of the Koreans' strong loyalty to the Chinese imperial throne, it should be noted that the king, though a prisoner of the Japanese, secretly had sent 2 members of the royal house, Li and Min, with tribute presents to the empress dowager. The envoys left Korea in September with an entourage of 150 persons and arrived in Peking after many tribulations. They remained in China during the whole war and vowed to return only after peace had been restored.



War news!

Sale of extra papers in Shanghai. (Caricature by a European reporter.)

The empress dowager's birthday gave occasion to an important event in the diplomatic world. *For the first time since the Europeans arrived in China their envoys were received in an audience with the emperor as representatives of independent sovereign nations.*

For the masses of the Chinese people their immense country has no limits. The idea of "China" only exists in the foreigners' heads. *Pu Tien Hsia* – everything under the sun – this is the Chinese consciousness.

By their moral superiority, their rich literature, their philosophies, and practical institutions the Chinese have for thousands of years had an uncontested hegemony in Asia – the part of the globe known to them. It is not to wonder that the idea of being superior to all the world has taken such deep roots in the nation's heart – despite all that has happened since the Europeans arrived.

That the Chinese emperor rules all the world represents a principle, a very important factor in the government machinery. It is an inherited article of faith against which all facts and arguments fall impotently to the ground. A mere suggestion to a Chinese of the common people that the puny potentates of the West consider themselves the equals of the emperor of *Pu Tien Hsia* may bring on a fit of convulsive laughter – these barbarians certainly have a gift for shameless effrontery!

The theory of world dominion has been advanced at several times in various forms, and we know how long the specter of the Holy Roman Empire outlived its reality – and it never had anything as solid a base as the Chinese empire. In our days we see how the papacy clings to the memory of its

past glories with a tenacity that yields nothing to the Chinese in holding on to a god-given right to world supremacy.

In most countries the theocratic forms of government have fallen away, but China has managed to build a stable government and society based on the people's moral or religious philosophy.

The most important government activities as well as all ceremonies in private life are controlled by theocratic principles, and it is possible that the lofty aim of bringing human activities into harmony with the will of Heaven is the reason for the nation's astonishing survival record.

But the theocratic system is unfortunately incompatible with the demands that the Western powers present in the final years of the nineteenth century. The Christian missionaries believe that the Chinese ancestor worship is incompatible with the spirit of the kind of Christianity they proclaim, and likewise, the Western political agents find a "Vicar of Heaven" incompatible with modern political thought.

This is a problem the Chinese statesmen have not been able to solve so far. Their ancestors found how to reconcile the commands of Heaven with the Chinese political system, and the nineteenth century's men must find how to reconcile the Chinese system with the rest of the civilized world.

*

Since the Europeans arrived, the audience question has been a constant source of dissension – they could get an audience – but only by observing the protocols whereby the envoys of vassal states were allowed to view "the dragon's countenance."

Then came the Opium Wars with their humiliating treaties. The foreign powers were allowed to keep legations in Peking, and one would think the audience question was resolved. But it was not. They did get an audience with the young Emperor Tung Che in 1873, but the reception was held outside the walls of the "Forbidden City" in a palace where the vassal states' envoys were received.

Of course, this gave the common man's ideas about the emperor's supremacy even more credence. The most ridiculous rumors spread all over China about the barbarians' behavior when His Majesty's awful gaze fell on their unworthy forms. According to the Chinese stories, the envoys had fallen down in the *kow-tow* and wet the floor with their anxious sweat. Prince Kung, who accompanied the emissaries, was then said to have reproved them for their lack of courage and called them a bunch of "chicken feathers"!!

The audience question lay dormant through the present emperor's minority, but when he came of age in 1889, the ruckus began anew.

And now the Chinese government had got another excuse. Since the foreign powers received China's *vassal state* representatives *as of equal status with themselves*, it was not reasonable that the ruler half the civilized world should receive the envoys of the Western powers as representatives of *his* equals. The Europeans' comedy act with the Korean representatives was thus turned against themselves.

It therefore caused a great deal of astonishment, when the emperor declared he was willing to give the envoys an audience on January 12, 1892 under the protocols suitable for the envoys of sovereign potentates. Europeans in the East

leaped for joy. Their goal had been achieved! But what happened next?

Well, the ceremony got a more independent character than in 1873, but the same palace was used for the reception. The Chinese government had again saved its face before the nation – while the Europeans fruitlessly gnashed their teeth in the press.

Then the Japanese attacked. They victoriously marched up through Korea and into Manchuria nearing the Great Wall. China's strongest fortress fell almost without resisting. The government realized that their hirelings fetched from prisons and the dregs of society were an inadequate shield against Japan's disciplined sons, fighting to compel the world's respect.

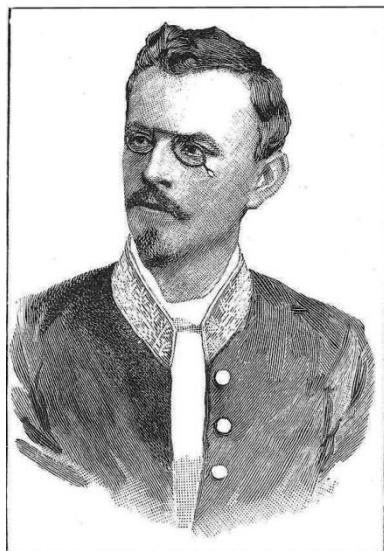
Now the Europeans could be useful for something – for the first time. They might perhaps block the islanders' victory run. Best to give them a concession, but what? That, for which they have striven for so many years – an audience as representatives of equal potentates inside the Forbidden City – would surely make the barbarians happy, and on the 12th of November 1894 this significant ceremony took place to the Europeans' full satisfaction.

That is not to say that the average Chinese thought any more of us after the audience. The ceremony was barely reported in *The Peking Gazette*, and the common people therefore hardly knew of the event.

But the government had fulfilled a heartfelt wish from the ministers' side, and moved to cash in on the moment before the sentiment vanished. The Tsung-li Yamen immediately requested that they make Japan come to the peace table. But

most just shook their heads and replied with lukewarm expressions of sympathy. Only the American ambassador, Colonel Denby, promised to do his best and got the administration in Washington to inquire in Tokyo whether Japan was willing to accept American mediation. Count Itō replied with a firm no and insisted that Japan, in view of its victories, must insist that China send its own plenipotentiary for the negotiations.

The government squirmed for a couple of days over taking this humiliating step, but Port Arthur's fall was expected at any moment, and it was finally decided to send Li Hung-chang's trusted friend, the German Hr. Detring, to Japan. This European held an important position as customs director at Tientsin, and it was assumed that the Japanese would be satisfied with him.



Customs director Detring

Hr. Detring left on the same day that Port Arthur fell, but when he arrived in Tokyo, the Prime Minister refused to even see him.

This negative response had several reasons. The Japanese probably did not have any wish to negotiate a peace yet. The Japanese people's enthusiasm for the war remained strong due to the hope of *dictating the peace settlement from inside the walls of Peking*. If this hope was lost, they at least wanted to see the humiliated China send one of its own men and not a foreigner.

As a pretext for the rejection of Hr. Detring, it was claimed that his diplomatic credentials were not sufficient to conclude a peace settlement. The wording of his commission is quoted below, so that Europe's diplomats themselves can judge the validity of this pretext:

"Earl Li Hungchang, Imperial Commissioner, &c,
to his Excellency Count Itō, Minister-President,
&c.—

The Ta Ching* dynasty is in the enjoyment of its traditional policy of peace with every nation, but there have lately arisen, unhappily, disputes with your country whereby the usual friendly intercourse has been exchanged for a state of war. Seeing that no inconsiderable calamities have lately fallen upon our people, it is now proposed that both countries should temporarily direct their forces on sea and on land to cease hostilities. A memorial having been presented to the Throne as to the advisability of this course, the commands of his Imperial Majesty, my august master, were received as follows :—

'Whereas Mr. Detring has held office in our Empire for many years and has proved himself

* *Ta Ching* is the official name of the Manchu dynasty.

faithful and true and worthy of the highest trust, We command Li Hung-chang to inform him fully and completely of whatever has so far been deliberated upon and decided, and to direct him to proceed to Japan without delay and effect a settlement. As occasion arises Mr. Detring will inform Us confidentially, with due speed, of the progress of the negotiations.'

In accordance with His Majesty's commands, Mr. Detring, together with officials holding rank of the first grade, is directed to proceed to Tokio to present this despatch and to learn the conditions upon which peace may be regained and amicable intercourse re-established as of old. I therefore request your Excellency to discuss with Mr. Detring the manner in which friendly relations may be restored. This despatch is written commanding the proposal to the favourable consideration of your Excellency.

[Card of] Li Hung-chang,

November 18th, 1894."

Chapter Thirty-one

The winter campaign in Manchuria

When it was reported that the Japanese had crossed the Yalu, the leading newspapers expected that their victorious army would immediately march north and occupy Mukden.

Their ignorance of the terrain and the conditions in Manchuria in the wintertime must indeed have been abysmal to imagine that the Japanese would embark on so insane an enterprise.

What would the Japanese want in Mukden?

Well, Mukden was the Chinese holy city, and when it was conquered, the Manchu dynasty would be done for. The people would see it as a sign of the wrath of Heaven and topple the miserable dynasty from the throne. Then of course the major powers would have to step in to prevent anarchy, and with this in mind, European common opinion as pungently expressed in the papers, began to cut large areas from the presumed leaderless land. Of course, they would share a little with the Japanese; nor was Li Hung-chang forgotten. He might get as much as a third of China with title of king under protection from the major powers!

RIA Novosti was especially greedy. It called upon the Russian government to seize the favorable moment and annex Mongolia, Manchuria, and Korea, while Japan would be compensated elsewhere.

We well know that Russia has a healthy appetite, but 5 million square kilometers still could prove too much of a good thing for the Russian giant. Especially just then, as Tsar Alexander III lay mortally ill in Livadia Palace, and the foreign ministry was left in de Giers' non-aggressive hands.

Mukden is not the Chinese people's holy city. The Manchurians, on the other hand, regard this place with great reverence, since all their brave chieftains, who laid the basis for the Manchu Empire, lie buried here. From here the army with which the poor, sturdy mountain people conquered the world's largest and most fruitful empire set forth.

Mukden should therefore stand in an anything but holy light for the subjugated Chinese people, and the truth is that the majority of the nation hardly has any idea of where the holy city is located, since, as I have earlier mentioned, the masses of the people does not worry themselves much about areas that lie outside the Great Wall – outside China proper.

If the Japanese had conquered all of Manchuria – even including Peking – it would hardly have had any significant effect on the dynasty. The Europeans would have understood this if they had sufficient knowledge of China's political geography and history. I will cite only the last historical example.

In 1861 the Taipings held a third of China's most fertile and richest provinces. Their leader was proclaimed emperor in the old national capital Nanking. At the same time an allied

Anglo-French army forced its way to Peking, burned the Summer Palace, and robbed millions of dollars worth of art works and other valuables.

According to European experience these unfortunate events should have been fatal for the dynasty. But what happened? Emperor Hien Feng simply moved his court up to his summer residence at Yehol in Manchuria. Here he passed away, just when his brother, Prince Kung, made peace with the Europeans on some very harsh conditions. Tung Che, his six years old son, was proclaimed emperor, and the court moved back to Peking without any of the Chinese viceroys making any difficulties whatever.

Is not this good evidence of the dynasty's survivability?

The first Manchu emperors, Kang Hi and Kien Lung, made their new homeland a great service by bringing their old Nemesis, the Tartars, under Chinese rule and civilizing influence. No one understands the significance of this endeavor better than the Chinese themselves, and the thinking part of the nation much prefer the present arrangement to getting the Mongol and Manchurian tribes as enemies again – which would only benefit the Russians.

The descendants of the Manchurians who followed along to China have apparently lost most of their wild warrior spirit during two and a half centuries of living with the peaceful Chinese, as evidenced by their poor performance during this war. But in the mountains of Mongolia and Manchuria there still lives a vigorous race, which may only need a Tamerlane or Genghis Khan – and modern weapons – to begin a new victorious advance through Asia.

In the first years of the conquest, the highest offices were occupied by Manchurians, but today the situation is almost the opposite. None of the present viceroys have Manchurian blood in their veins. Therefore we can say with some justification that the Manchurian dominance in China in practice is no more real than Hanoverian rule, or Dutch under William III, was in England.

There certainly are several political societies, such as *San-ho-hui* and *Kol-ao-hui*, that dream of a native dynasty, but their plans have never caught on, since the broad masses of the people are not concerned about the emperor's ethnicity.

The Chinese system of government also makes a dynastic change very difficult. The powerful office of viceroy is not inheritable; the viceroys are simply officials of the civil bureaucracy. They receive all their power from the emperor on the recommendation of the council of state, and he can take it all away from them with a simple telegram – if he finds it convenient for the security of the dynasty. Even Li-Hung-chang, who for years have had a thoroughly dominant influence, must in the end bow to the emperor's authority, although he may more than once have been in a position to take over the throne of his native country.

The imperial crown is so revered in China that as long as its bearer does not breach the empire's old laws, or make himself hated by disreputable behavior, we may be assured that the powerful viceroys will obey an imperial order that calls on them to break a colleague's contumacy. This we see in China's history.

A dynastic change could therefore be taken out of consideration during the war, though many a European

politician's teeth watered at the thought of all that might happen after the Japanese occupied Mukden.

*

After taking Chiulienchêng on the 26th of October, Marshal Yamagata marched against Antung, which also surrendered without resistance, and he established his headquarters here.

The Chinese army meanwhile had retreated in 2 different directions. One part marched south along the coast to Takushan, while the main force took the road north to Fênghuangchêng, where the new generalissimo, Sung Ching, stood with a few thousand men. He had just taken over command after General Yeh, who had been ordered to Peking to account for his behavior at Pingyang.

General Sung had earlier been commandant at Port Arthur – and there he ought to have stayed, since then the Japanese would hardly have come into possession of this most important place so cheaply. The choice of the new commanding general turned out to be most fortunate. Sung was not a topnotch strategist like his opponent, Marshal Yamagata, but he was without a doubt the best general the Chinese could send into the field.

From Antung, the Japanese 5th Division under Lieutenant General Nodzu marched against Fênghuangchêng. Since this town was difficult to defend, Sung ordered General Nieh to withdraw northward to block the road to Mukden, while he himself retreated westward.

Fênghuangchêng was occupied by the Japanese on November 1, and here they temporarily halted, since Nodzu

probably thought it too risky to continue his march west to Haichêng as long as General Nieh stood to his north and could cut off a possible retreat.

A couple of brigades equipped with mountain howitzers moved up toward Lienshankuan with great difficulty and were constantly harassed by Chinese cavalry.

From Lienshankuan, the Japanese continued northward following the road to Liaoyang, but on the 26th of November they met a large Chinese detachment led by General Nieh himself and had to turn back.

The Japanese now sought to advance further in a northeasterly direction and cross the mountain chain Molien-ling, but the terrain proved too difficult, and in early December they had to turn back to Fênghuangchêng, pursued by the Chinese right up to the city walls. Here, there was a minor battle, after which the Chinese withdrew a little to the north again.

The Japanese movement up toward Mukden probably had a double objective. The 2nd Army Corps had just landed at Port Arthur, and they wanted to divert Sung's attention to other areas. This was successful, at least to a certain extent. General Nieh's force was tied up with their feint to the north, and General Sung quick-marched west to Kaiping when he was notified by telegraph that Taliewan and Kinchow had fallen. From Kaiping he sent General Liu southward with 5,000 men. He could not spare a larger force, since he had to defend Haichêng and Niuchang – and not only against the Japanese, but also against his fellow countrymen. More about this later.

General Liu reached Kinchow on the 21st of November, the same day as Port Arthur fell. Here, Oyama had left a very strong garrison. The Chinese tried to take the city by storm, but failed. They were repulsed after losing 300 men, and when Oyama shortly afterward sent most of his army northward, Liu had to retreat to Fuchow.* A large number of the soldiers that had escaped from Port Arthur joined up with him during this retreat.

General Sung then began to draw in to him all the troops that were available and formed a line of defense stretching from Kaiping to Liaoyang. He hoped that the Manchurian winter would place so many obstacles in the way for the Japanese army's march across the peninsula that the government in Peking would have time to send him some serviceable soldiers, and in the spring he might possibly be able to throw the Japanese out of Manchuria. But the generalissimo's hopes turned out to be a *fata morgana*.

Certainly hundreds of the small islanders succumb to cold and overexertion in the harsh mountainous country. Their dimmed eyes close in death. In their last feverish fantasies they perhaps see their ancestral land, the beautiful Japan, bathed in the rising sun's rays. Or perhaps they dream that they are returning to Tokyo in triumph, crowned by the laurels of war, while the islands' beautiful daughters throw them flowers and kisses.

* A so practical people as the Japanese has of course realized that sea fortifications should be placed under the navy's command. A couple of days after the fall of Port Arthur, the whole naval base with its fortifications and works was placed under Admiral Itō's command. Commander Miaura was appointed as commandant.

Or perhaps a dark despair is the dominant feeling in the last hour of death? Not everyone get to enjoy the kind care of the merciful nurses in the field hospitals, who carry out their blessed mission under the cross of Geneva.



A scene from a Japanese field hospital.

But they can hardly blame the *mikado* or his ministers for that. Warm blankets, tents, doctors and medicines – everything that can alleviate the misery of the winter campaign – is sent to the army, which despite all advances further and further, while General Sung learns the bitter truth that his government is hardly able to bring forth a single legion of serviceable soldiers to fight the invaders.

We shall now in broad outlines follow the Japanese army's march across the Liaotung peninsula. First I might mention that Marshal Yamagata had to leave Antung on December 10 and return to Japan due to illness. The *mikado* appointed Lieutenant General Nodzu as his successor.

As stated earlier, a part of the Chinese army had retreated down to Takushan after the Japanese took Chiulienchêng. Yamagata immediately sent all of his 3^d Division under General Katsura after them, since he feared the Chinese had got word of the II Army landing at Taliénwan.

But this was not the case. Instead of continuing along the coast to Taliénwan, the fleeing Chinese changed direction at Takushan and went west toward Haichêng. Katsura followed and on the 18th of November he reached the city of Hsuoyen, which was occupied without resistance.

The forces finally came together in a serious scuffle at Ssumêncêng. A corps of ca. 10-15,000 Chinese tried to stop Katsura's division. The battle began in the evening on the 11th of December and lasted until the afternoon of the following day. The Chinese then had to abandon the field to the Japanese and retreat westward. The losses on both sides are said to have been significant.

Ssumêncêng was set on fire during the battle, and the whole population became homeless. It is reported that several hundred women and children froze to death and as many were permanently crippled.

The victory was of major importance for the Japanese, who moved into Haichêng on the 13th of December.

This city has great strategic significance, since the roads to Kinchow, Laoyang, and Fênghuanchêng come together

here. The Japanese at once began to fortify the city all around, fearing that Sung would tryt to drive them out again.

This proved to be a very necessary precaution, since already a couple of days after the fall of Haichêng, Katura had to fight off a very violent counterattack by the Chinese, who had moved into the city of Kangwangtsai.

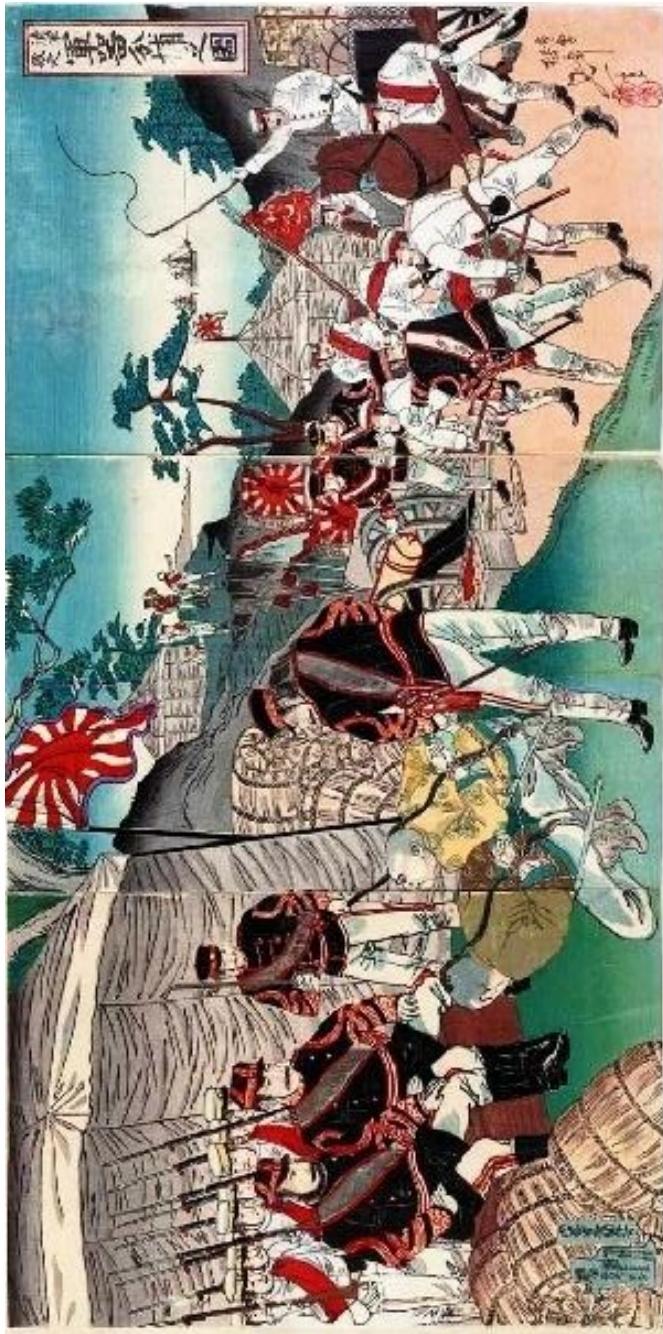
About the same time most of the 5th Division arrived from Fênghuangchêng, where Colonel Tomayusu was left behind with a couple of brigades as garrison.

Major General Nogi had moved from Kinchow all the way up to Kaiping, and at year's end 1894, Sung and Nodzu faced each other between Kaiping and Liaoyang. Both generals had about the same strength – between 30 and 40,000 men.

One may wonder why General Sung did not do all he possibly could to relieve Port Arthur or block the road to Haichêng. For example, if he had gathered his whole army at Ssumênchêng, the Japanese would probably have had to retreat.

Only a couple of months after the fall of Haichêng did the reason for Sung's apparent tardiness become known. A proclamation in *The Peking Gazette* for 21 February 1895 reported that *a rather serious rebellion finally had been suppressed*.

Outside the Great Wall, on the Mongolian and Manchurian high plains, there are a lot of Chinese residents; some voluntary, others exiled criminals. These people have always showed themselves very resistant to the authorities. The majority are members of a political society that calls itself *Ti-tien Shing-tao*, or "The Tools of Heaven."



Japanese officers interrogate Chinese prisoner.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

When the Japanese began their march through Manchuria, this society decided that their time had come to raise the banner of revolution. The movement quickly grew from the Great Wall all the way up to the Amur River. Thus a large part of the governments troops in Mongolia and Manchuria had their hands full with suppressing the rebellion. The situation had become very critical about the time when the Japanese moved against Haichêng, but fortunately for the Chinese government, the leaders of the uprising began to quarrel with each other. General Sung took advantage of this and offered the foremost leader, Han Pien-wei, full amnesty and rank of general if he would break with his comrades. After some negotiations, the rebel leader accepted the deal and gave the Chinese army a very welcome reinforcement of ca. 8,000 men.

Chapter Thirty-two

The conquest of Wei-hai-wei

The Manchurian winter and General Sung's stubborn resistance temporarily stopped the Japanese advance through Manchuria. The whole Bay of Pechihli out to Port Arthur lay covered in ice. A landing at Shanhakuan was thus not possible.

A new field of operations was needed, and that at once, in order to strike such hard blows that the fruits of an eventual peace agreement would satisfy the Japanese public's conceit, and nothing was more suited to achieve this goal than the capture of Wei-hai-wei.

To carry out this daring plan, the war ministry had again organized a new army corps in Hiroshima by the end of the year.

The naval base Wei-hai-wei lies almost opposite Port Arthur on the other side of Pechihli Bay. Like Port Arthur, it owes its existence to Li Hung-chang. While Port Arthur with its magnificent yards and docks was intended to offer a secure

refuge for ships in need of maintenance and repairs, Wei-hai-wei was intended as home base for the entire fleet.

A roomier and better protected harbor is not to be found along all of Shantung's coast. Here, half a hundred warships can easily keep their anchor chains clear of each other with the exception of the northwest corner, where the city of Wei-hai-wei lies, the harbor is surrounded by mountains, and the islands Liukungtao and Itan Rock give sufficient protection against the sea.

From a strategic point of view, the choice of the northern fleet's main station could not have been better. Together with Port Arthur, Wei-hai-wei should have been capable of controlling the entrance to the Bay of Pechihli. It is thus easy to understand that the Japanese wanted to take possession of the base. Especially, since they assumed that Admiral Ting would be in charge of the defenses.

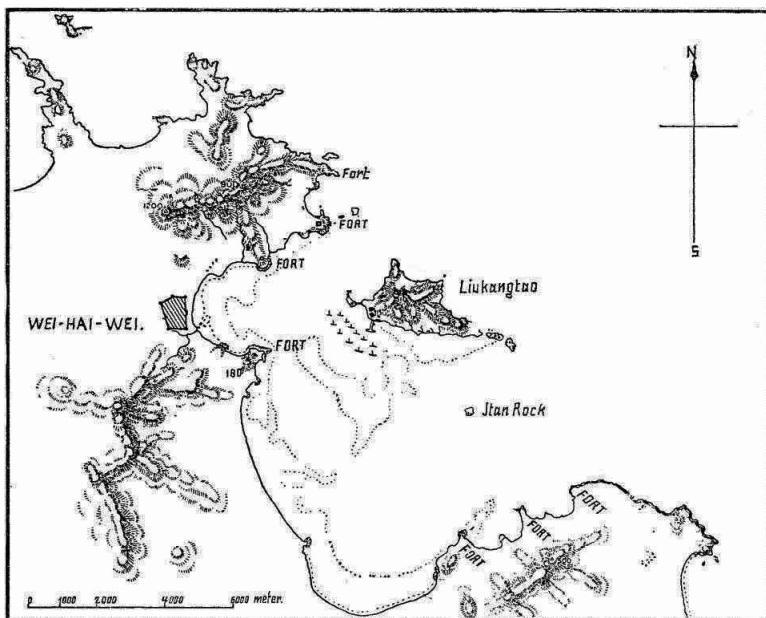
If they could destroy the Peiyang squadron at the same time; then there would be a possibility of dictating the peace conditions in Peking in the spring.

The construction of the naval base had begun a couple of years after Port Arthur. An arsenal, a couple of lesser repair works, and numerous storehouses for naval equipment and supplies were built on the southwest corner of Liukungtao and also a seamanship school that McGiffin was put in charge of.* The officer aspirants went through a preparatory course here before they entered the naval academy in Tientsin.

A high ridge runs along the whole island. During my visits to Wei-hai-wei in the summer of 1892, I always took a

* As earlier mentioned, McGiffin was executive officer on "*Chen Yuen*" in the Battle at Yalu.

trip there to view the ongoing construction of the defensive works. My impression was that Liukungtao would be capable of enduring a siege of several months when the forts were completed, which at least 2 of them were when the war broke out.



Wei-hai-wei

I also made a visit to Itan Rock. The cliff had been turned into one single fort with huge cannon on *Mongriff* gun mounts. It also served as a sighting station for the harbor's extensive mine system.

On the land side, Wei-hai-wei is surrounded by several forts which are excellently sited to defend against attacks from the *sea side*. The fortifications to block attacks from the rear – from the west and south – on the other hand, were not

complete, and the Japanese built their plan of attack on this deficiency.

The III Army left Hiroshima the 10th of January 1895 on 35 transport ships convoyed by most of the fleet.

Meanwhile, the flying squadron, which we know from the Battle at Yalu, had meanwhile been tasked with diverting attention from the transport movement. The ships cruised around Port Arthur and Chefoo after the 8th of January.

Three of the ships showed themselves in the afternoon of the 18th outside the city of Tungchow and sent a hail of projectiles in among the houses. Oddly, only a couple of them caught on fire. The Japanese returned the next day and sent Tungchow another greeting.

This bombardment of a defenseless city was strongly criticized, especially by the Europeans who lived there, but I believe the Japanese only did what any other power would have done in their place, while such an important attack was underway. They needed to divert the Chinese government's attention from the landing of the troops, and that they achieved by the bombardment of Tungchow.

The transport fleet had meanwhile reached Talienwan. Here it took onboard a brigade of the II Army and all of the siege artillery that had been used against Port Arthur.

General Nogi's division, which stood up by Kaiping, was placed under Nodzu's command. The rest of the II Army was left as a garrison, and Marshal Oyama took over the command of the newly formed III Army, which now numbered 20,000 soldiers and 10,000 coolies.

The Japanese had picked Yungchêng, which lies approximately 50 kilometers east of Wei-hai-wei, for the

main landing place. Only a couple of brigades under Major General Nichu were ordered to land at Ninhai, ca. 50 kilometers west of the naval base in order to cut off any escape by the garrison, which consisted of 8,000 men, including the crews of the Peiyang squadron, who provided most of the fighting power during the siege.

At dawn on January 20th the Japanese fleet went to anchor in Yungchêng Bay. A strong wind was blowing, and the thermometer is said to have stood at -20° C. It was done so secretly that the Chinese had no inkling of the enemy fleet's movements. A small battery had been set up on the beach, but it was soon silenced, and the crew fled as soon as the Japanese marines began to come ashore.

When the whole army was safely on shore, the fleet left Yungchêng and moved in front of Wei-hai-wei in order to block Admiral Ting from leaving the harbor.

Slowly but surely, the Japanese now marched toward their goal. Each night they were pestered by small Chinese detachments. A group of 500 Cantonese was especially bothersome. The weather was extraordinarily cold, and most of the soldiers had to bivouac on the exposed snow-covered fields, since there were not enough villagers' houses to take shelter in. But they were so perfectly equipped that only a score fell sick during the march.

The 26th of January was the Chinese New Year – the nation's major holiday – and since the Japanese assumed that Wei-hai-wei's ranking officers would be gathered in the imperial temple on Liukungtao to conduct the usual New Year's ceremonies, they decided to attempt a surprise attack.



A Japanese officer is carried from the battlefield.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

But for once the Chinese mandarins had broken with the ancient rituals, and the Japanese found them at their posts.

At 3 in the morning the electric searchlights on Liu-kungtao and the ships discovered the entire Japanese fleet steering toward the western entrance in 2 divisions with a swarm of torpedo boats in the van. The alarm was immediately given, and firing began across the whole line with such violence that Admiral Itō had to call off the attack after a couple of hours and head back out to sea.

At the same time Major General Nichi, who had marched east from Ninhai, tried to take the batteries and earthworks that were to defend the village of Wei-hai-wei by surprise. As soon as the Chinese scout patrols had reported that the enemy was approaching, the outposts withdrew into a forest, which formed the first line of defense. The outposts numbered 800 cavalrymen commanded by a foreign officer. Shortly thereafter 600 sailors came to help with a score machine guns and rapid-firing cannon, which forced the Japanese to halt. When a couple of thousand infantry troops also came forward, Nichi had to retreat from the woods. The surprise attacks thus miscarried on both land and sea.

The main force from Yungchēng did not participate in the attack, since the difficult terrain had slowed it down. Not until January 30th could Oyama move up to the foot of the mountain chain that surrounds the southeastern part of the harbor. The attack began early in the morning from 2 sides. The Chinese infantry tried time and again to stop the Japanese advance, but without success. The enemy moved step by step along the mountain paths and down against the forts. General Odera, who commanded the right wing, was hit by a project-

tile, but the battle excited soldiers stormed forward over his corpse, and before evening all the forts and batteries on the southeast side were in the hands of the Japanese in spite of the Chinese ships supporting the small garrisons as best they could.

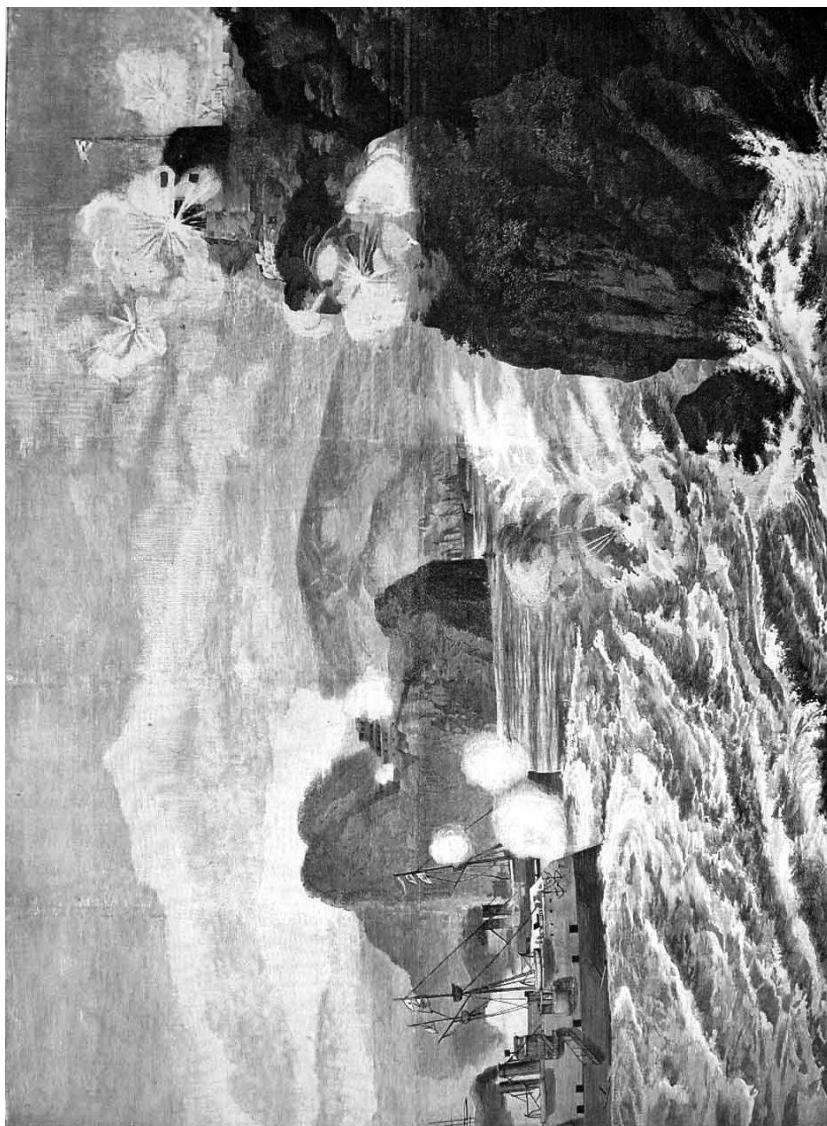
During the night a strong wind with driving snow sprang up from the northeast, which forced Admiral Itō to seek shelter in the Bay of Yungchēng. The weather was so violent that Oyama also had to stay quiet until February 2nd. The weather then improved, the fleet returned, and the troops again moved forward to conquer the town of Wei-hai-wei and the northeastern forts.

Not much effort was required. Admiral Ting had got his way – over the commandant's protest – in having the batteries on the land side destroyed before the attack, since he knew that the forts would be taken and did not wish to have their guns turned against his ships.

Unfortunately, the forts themselves were not blown up, probably due to the Chinese army officers' resistance to this step, and the Japanese therefore could bring their artillery up into advantageous positions inside the abandoned fortifications.

Now a violent artillery battle began. The Chinese knew that they would lose to the superior forces of the enemy. They had given up hope that Shantung's governor would come to their rescue. He probably was busy drawing up meter-long dispatches to the emperor about this and that instead of ordering his provincial forces to march to Wei-hai-wei.

The Japanese fleet's reconnaissance at Wei-hai-wei 17 August 1894.



(This page intentionally left blank.)

Heavy firing was maintained by both sides the whole day of February 4th. The evening fell with no let up. The moon went down. Only the beams from the electric search-lights throw their lights across the dismal scene. Then suddenly several signal rockets streak up from the Chinese patrol boats. The Japanese fleet approaches the harbor with 15 torpedo boats running ahead. These long steel snakes sneak cautiously toward the eastern entrance under the protection of the cruisers' heavy guns. Suddenly they move with full steam across the lines of mines and in among the Chinese ships.

At first the Chinese are uncertain if it is their own torpedo boats, but this uncertainty only lasts a few seconds. A violent explosion drowns out the thunder of the cannon. The torpedoes have not missed their marks. The daring assailants try to get out of the avenging rain of projectiles. Most of them succeed – though in pitiable condition – but they can be content. The *mikado* will award their bravery. Three of the Chinese ships are destroyed; the flagship, "Ting-Yuen," the cruiser "Lai-Yuen," and the gunboat "Wei-Yuen."

"Ting-Yuen" was hit in the stern. Though a mass of water rushed in, the pumps and the watertight bulkheads kept the vessel afloat for several hours. The next day the huge ship was run up on sandbank, so that they could at least make use of the rapid-firing cannon.

"Lai-Yuen" had a coal lighter on each side. A moment after the torpedo exploded, it turned over with the keel up and drew the lighters down with it. Only a few of the crew were able to jump overboard before the ship sank. With great effort a hole was drilled in the double bottom, large enough to stick an arm through, but when the Japanese fire became too vio-

lent, the rescue work had to be abandoned and the brave sailors, who had fought so valiantly at Yalu, slowly died of hunger and cold. Even three days later, a hand could now and then be seen to stick up out of the hole!



Marshal Oyama
The conqueror of Port Arthur and Wei-ha-wei.

We may judge what the weather was like in this night of horror by that the whole crew on a Japanese torpedo boat was found frozen to death in the morning.

The Japanese made another combined attack on the 7th of February. This time they succeeded in silencing the cannons at the fort on Itan Rock. This island's battery was commanded by 3 European officers and had kept up a very effective fire against the conquered land forts the whole time.

The Peiyang squadron also suffered a significant loss on this day. First the cruiser "*Ching-Yuen*" was sunk and then 12 Chinese torpedo boats, which may have intended to slip out of the trap before it became too late, did not even get to fire off their torpedoes. Shot through by Japanese rapid-firing cannon, they sank into their watery grave, one after the other. Only one of them got away safely to Chefoo.

When the army troops on Liukungtao saw the torpedo boats running out of the harbor, they thought the whole squadron would soon follow their example and leave them in the lurch. They therefore demanded that Admiral Ting, who had been obliged to take command from the beginning of the attack, should enter into negotiations with the Japanese. A large group took possession of one of the ships and threatened to leave the harbor.

At this critical moment the commandant called a meeting of the foreign officers to hear their opinions. The ammunition was almost spent, and it would only be possible to keep up the fight for a couple of days more, even if they could cope with the infantry's mutinous behavior.

After a long discussion, the foreign officers decided to recommend surrender. One of the gentlemen went onboard "*Chen-Yuen*," where Admiral Ting had hoisted his flag after the loss of "*Ting-Yuen*."

This brave sailor at first would not hear any talk about surrender. He would rather steam out with the surviving ships and cause the Japanese as much damage as they could before being sunk. However, this desperate plan was soon abandoned on closer reflection – not least because of all the men who would follow him in death.

Shortly after the assembled officers had left his cabin, the admiral sat down and wrote a letter to Admiral Itō and Marshal Oyama, wherein he declared himself ready to surrender Liukungtao and the ships on condition that the squadron's crews and the island's garrison were given free parole. This document was sent over the next morning, February 12th, with a gunboat.

The next day the Chinese received a message that the victors would assent to the condition out of regard for the admiral's brave defense. But Ting had then already mounted the dragon and passed up to the blue sky above. He could not survive the defeat. His sorrow was too strong, and he sought liberation in death by his own hand. The same did Rear Admiral Liu Pu-chin, Commodore Yang, and Wei-hai-wei's nominal commandant, Chang Ta-san, a nephew of Li Hung-chang's late wife.

The Scot John McClure, who some time before had been given rank as vice admiral in the Chinese navy, was now the surviving ranking officer, and the unpleasant duty of signing the surrender documents fell to him.

On the 17th of February, Admiral Itō steamed into the harbor with the entire Japanese fleet and took over command of the remnants of the Peiyang squadron.

This consisted of the armored cruiser "*Chen-Yuen*," the cruisers "*Ping-Yuen*," "*Tsi-Yuen*," "*Kuang-Ping*," 5 gunboats, 5 torpedo boats, and the torpedo supply ship "*Kang-Chi*."



Vice Admiral McClure

The Japanese fulfilled their commitments to the fullest. The soldiers and seamen were allowed to take with them all their personal belonging, and several of the officers were even furnished horses and wagons for their baggage.

Admiral Ting and the corpses of the other officers were brought onboard "*Kang-Chi*." When the ship steamed out of the harbor, all flags were lowered to half mast, and Admiral Itō ordered the mourning salute to be fired as a sign of his high regard for his brave opponent – and old friend.

Chapter Thirty-three

Bureaucracy and waging war – Chang Ying-huan and Shao Yu-lien's peace mission – Negotiations in Hiroshima with Count Itō and Baron Mutsu – Japan wishes to continue the war, and the envoys must return with their mission unaccomplished.

The Chinese government's inability to relieve Wei-hai-wei in its hour of need is a good example of how bureaucratic sluggishness can negate any military enterprise.

There is not a country anywhere, where bureaucratic red tape has had better opportunities to permeate the civil administration than in China. An official who could write elegant memoranda has often been promoted ahead of his less literate, but more productive colleagues.

The peculiar exemplars of bureaucratese in our own government offices – where the ambiguity of the words and the length of the sentences are especially prized – will hardly win effusive praise in the East. Here it is the sheer mass of memoranda and their length and detail that complicate the daily workings of the machinery.

When reports of the Japanese landing at Yunchêng were received, a *mass* of orders were issued by post and telegraph to move troops to Wei-hai-wei posthaste, but these orders had

as usual to pass through the civil administration's offices and so, of course, were not forwarded until it was too late.

General von Hanneken, who had had an audience with the emperor and explained to His Majesty the bare truth about the empire's military preparedness, was given very wide authority to raise new armies. By New Year's, an idea that the Japanese might try something at Wei-hai-wei had reached the Peking government, and von Hanneken had requested Prince Kung to select 30-40,000 of the best troops stationed around Peking and march them along the coast to Wei-hai-wei.

The prince promptly agreed to the plan, but then the bureaucrats got in the way. Since von Hanneken was a foreigner, he had according to custom been given a civil colleague to advise him. This gentleman, His Excellence Hu Yu-fēn, who earlier had been justice minister for the Kuangsi province, found that the enterprise was far too hazardous, and besides, he found it inappropriate that a foreigner got command of so large a body of troops. These considerations he scrawled up in a meter-long report to the emperor. The result was that von Hanneken's prudent plan was abandoned – and Wei-hai-wei's fate was sealed.

The Japanese army's march across the Liaotung peninsula had, of course, made a considerable impression in Peking. After Detring's unsuccessful attempt to initiate peace negotiations, it was found best to bite the sour apple and send a couple of higher ranking officials to Japan. The government's choice fell on the vice-president of the Finance Department, Chung Ying-huan, who had been ambassador in Washington, and Shao Yu-lien, acting governor of Hunan. But when General Sung finally got the enemy's advance in

Manchuria stopped by New Year's, the government thought it best to wait and see what would happen next. Perhaps the fortunes of war would turn again!

Then came the report of the Japanese landing at Yungchêng – the despised *Wo-jên* thus had now set foot on the holy ground of China itself – and it was understood in Peking that it was best to send off the envoys as quickly as possible.

One of Li Hung-chang's most distinguished secretaries, Wu Ting-fang, who had training as an English jurist, was sent along to assist with the eventual peace settlement, and the former American Secretary of the Interior, Mr. J.W. Foster was engaged as adviser for the whole delegation.

On the 1st of February the legation was ceremoniously received in Hiroshima by Count Itō and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Viscount Mutsu. At the exchange of credentials, the Japanese government found it appropriate to consider the Chinese representatives' written authority inadequate. It read as follows:

"By decree we do appoint Chang Ying-Huan, etc., etc., and Shao Yu-lien, etc., etc., as our plenipotentiaries to meet and negotiate the matter with the plenipotentiaries appointed by Japan.

You will, however, telegraph to the Tsung-li-Yamen for the purpose of obtaining our commands, by which you will abide. The members of your mission are placed under your control. You will carry out your mission in a faithful and diligent manner, and will fulfill the trust we have reposed in you. Respect this!

Seal of Imperial Command."

The letter of authority was accompanied by a handwritten letter from His Majesty to the *mikado*.

A couple of hours after the first meeting ended, the Chinese envoys received a note from Viscount Mutsu, wherein he requested that they respond in writing as to what extent their credentials – which still had not been studied in detail – really gave them authority to negotiate peace. They replied as follows:

"We, the undersigned, have been given the necessary authority to negotiate and sign the peace treaty. In order to ensure a more expeditious compliance with the conditions of the treaty, we shall telegraph for the emperor's sanction of the conditions and to establish the day on which we will sign the treaty documents, whereafter the same will be taken back to China so that His Majesty will have an opportunity to study the several paragraphs, and if everything is in order, the treaty will be ratified as quickly as possible."

At the next session, Count Itō read the following speech:

"The step which my colleague and myself find it necessary at this moment to adopt is the logical and inevitable result of a situation for which we are in no wise responsible.

China has hitherto held herself almost entirely aloof from other powers, and while she has in some instances enjoyed the advantages accruing to her as a member of the family of nations, she has perhaps more frequently denied the responsibility of that relation. She has pursued a policy of isolation and mistrust, and consequently her external relations have not been characterized by that frankness and good faith which are essential to good neighborhood. Instances are not wanting in which Chinese com-

missions after having formally agreed to international compacts have refused to affix their seals, and cases might be cited in which treaties so concluded have been unceremoniously and without apparent reason repudiated. These unfortunate occurrences find an explanation in the fact that China was not on occasions seriously in earnest, but beyond that it might be said with truth that the officials who were designated to carry on negotiations had not been clothed with the necessary authority for the purpose.

It has from the first been the wish of Japan to avoid results which history teaches are liable to be the outcome of negotiations with Chinese officials who are not clothed with the necessary power in the sense in which that term is usually understood. Consequently the imperial government made it a condition precedent to our peace negotiations that the Chinese should be furnished with full powers to conclude peace, and it was only upon receiving positive assurances from the Chinese Government that that condition precedent had been complied with, that his Majesty, the Emperor of Japan, has conferred upon my colleague and myself full powers to conclude and sign preliminaries of peace with the of China. That Your Excellencies' powers are, notwithstanding that assurance. fatally defective is to me a sure indication that the Government of China is not yet really solicitous for peace.

Flaws in the Credentials:

Criticism is nearly exhausted by a simple comparison of the two instruments which were reciprocally exchanged at this table yesterday, but it is not out of place to point out that one fulfills the definition which is usually given by civilized states to the term 'full powers,' while

the other is destitute of nearly all those qualities which are regarded as essential to such powers; it even fails to indicate the subject upon which Your Excellencies are to negotiate; it does not authorize your Excellencies to conclude or sign anything; it is silent on the subject of the subsequent imperial ratification of your Excellencies' acts. In short it would seem that the authority which has been conferred upon Your Excellencies would be completely fulfilled by your reporting to your government what my colleague and myself might have to say. In this situation it would be impossible for us to continue negotiations. The restoration of peace is a matter of the greatest importance. While Japan has found no reason to approach China on the subject of peace, she nevertheless feels bound, in deference to that civilization which she represents, to listen to any *bona fide* overtures which China may advance, but she will decline to take part in the future in any fruitless negotiations, or become a party to a paper peace. The terms which Japan agrees to will be scrupulously observed by her, and she will at the same time insist upon a like observance of the terms by China. Whenever, therefore, China finds herself seriously and sincerely desirous of peace and will confide actual powers to Chinese officials, whose official positions will serve as an assurance that the terms to which they may agree will be confirmed and carried out in good faith, Japan will be prepared to enter upon new negotiations."

There was now nothing more that the Chinese envoys could do. After returning to their hotel, they replied with the following letter:

"To His Majesty, the Emperor of Japan's plenipotentiary ministers.

Excellencies:

After having listened to His Excellency, Count Itō's, speech, whereof an exemplar was given to us, and wherein the reasons why the negations are terminated are set forth, we were advised that preparations would be made for our departure.

Before we leave the country, we find that it is our duty to our government and ourselves to make the following declaration. The credentials which we delivered to you yesterday during the meeting, give us, as we have earlier explained, full authority to conclude a peace treaty, and we have expressly emphasized to Your Excellencies that we are prepared to sign the treaty, if our negotiations should have a satisfactory conclusion. This is affirmed in the most solemn and authoritative manner in the letter our exalted sovereign has addressed to His Majesty, the Emperor of Japan, which we showed to you at our first meeting. On the same occasion, we requested permission to deliver the letter in person to His Majesty, which request Your Excellencies rejected. A translation of the letter is enclosed with this document.

We cannot agree with Your Excellencies that the instruction in our credentials about telegraphing for the emperor's sanction of the result of our negotiations in any way diminishes our

authority to sign a treaty. As we have already declared, the intent of using the telegraph was to ensure a more rapid ratification and effectuation of the treaty after it was signed. That our interpretation of our authority is supported by our government is proved by the fact that the United States' ambassador in Peking, at your government's request, received from Tsung-li Yamen an assurance that we were clothed with full authority to negotiate for and sign a peace treaty.

We further offered at our conference today to get any technical defect that, according to your opinion, impaired our credentials corrected by telegraph. The credentials which we delivered to you are in all respects just like the credentials His Majesty, the Emperor of China, has been accustomed to give his plenipotentiary ministers when such are sent to other lands to conclude treaties. As far as we know, this is the first time that such credentials have been rejected.

Our mission is peace, and it is not appropriate for us now to discuss the less than gracious expressions heard here with reference to the Chinese government's conduct. We will only express our deepest regrets that the earnest efforts we have made to fulfill out exalted sovereign's wishes for a swift and satisfactory conclusion to the war have been fruitless.

However, we cannot end this letter without expressing our astonishment over the manner in which we have been deprived of the usual privileges granted plenipotentiary ministers sent to conclude a peace treaty.

Count Itō has informed us that cipher telegrams to our government will not be allowed. We have likewise received notification from an

official in the Japanese Department of Foreign Affairs that a cipher telegram addressed to us has arrived, but will not be delivered unless we provide our government's cipher key so that the telegram can be translated. Before we left Peking, the United States' ambassador assured us that we would be allowed to communicate with our government by means of cipher telegrams.

We end by expressing our gratitude for the efforts the Japanese government has made in transporting the embassy from Kobe to this city and likewise for the hospitality shown to us. With assurances of our most exceptional esteem, we etc., etc.

The embassy returned home the next day. This new attempt to end the war does not need any long commentary. The Japanese war party still was in the majority, and Parliament, which was again in session, had appropriated 100 million Yen^{*} for continuation of the war on the same day the Chinese delegation was received by Count Itō.

The war exuberant Japanese wanted to make China drink the cup of humiliation to the bottom – and this was the reason why the peace negotiations failed.

* 1 Yen ≈ 2.50 kroner.

Chapter Thirty-four

The Treaty of Shimonoseki

At the end of his long speech to the Chinese envoys at the peace conference in Hiroshima, Count Itō stated that the negotiations would be resumed when the Chinese government sent a man with more extensive credentials, a man, who possessed such influence among his own people that he in himself was sufficient guarantee that the peace conditions were complied with.

The Japanese prime minister's meaning could hardly be misinterpreted. In any case, the Chinese government understood whom Count Itō had in mind. There was only *one* person who possessed such qualifications – and that was Li Hung-chang. This realization must surely have been a little humiliating for many of the arrogant gentlemen, who had attempted to undermine the great statesman's authority during the war.

As so many times before, the elderly Li became the Peking government's last resort. To start with he was again permitted to wear the Yellow Riding Jacket, the Peacock Feather, and other curiosities. The viceroy presumably took

this act of grace with same imperturbable calm as the imperial decree that had deprived him of these marks of honor. Shortly thereafter, another document gave Li Hung-chang unlimited power to make peace and at the same time requested that he pay a visit to Peking so that the emperor and his ministers could confer with him in person.

Under other circumstances the viceroy would probably not have traveled to Peking without taking a couple of thousand men along as an honor guard. There had been no lack of flattering invitations in the recent years, but the censors' old enemy always suspected that the air at court might prove hazardous to his health and so preferred to remain safely in his viceroy's seat in Tientsin.

Now, on the other hand, he knew he was indispensable and did not hesitate long. Wang Wen-shao, who had earlier been viceroy in Yunnan, was appointed to take care of the administration in Tientsin during his absence.

Li Hung-chang left his capital on the 19th of February with only a very small entourage. He got a brilliant reception in Peking, and during several conversations with the emperor and the empress dowager, a number of misunderstandings were cleared up and the empire's pitiful means of defense laid out with all the clarity one could wish for.

The government wanted that the peace negotiations should take place on Chinese soil and proposed Port Arthur on the pretext that the elderly viceroy hardly would benefit from a sea voyage all the way to Japan. Though Count Itō may have been willing to save Li Hung-chang any unnecessary humiliation, he decided that he must insist on the demand for a meeting on Japanese soil. The nation's pride

required that the Chinese empire's greatest son should be made to travel to their country to beg for peace. Thus, after some telegraphing back and forth, Shimonoseki was set as the site for the meeting between Li- Hung-chang and Itō.

The peace envoys left for Japan on the 14th of March on two steamships. There were several European educated Chinese in the viceroy's numerous entourage, including his adoptive son Li Ching-fang, who earlier had been ambassador to the *mikado's* court. The American Mr. J.W. Foster* again went along as a diplomatic adviser.

The first meeting between the Japanese prime minister and the viceroy took place on the 20th of March. In this historic moment, when Asia's greatest statesmen shook hands, more than one of the observers must have thought of the vagaries of fate.

Ten years earlier, a while after Kim Ok Kuin's unsuccessful conspiracy, Li and Itō had met on behalf of their respective nations, but that time it was Li Hung-chang, who deigned to receive the *Wo-jēn* representative in his viceroy's palace in Tientsin, surrounded by the magnificence of his office and the impressive grandeur that only the rigid Chinese official etiquette can engender.

And now – now this man, whose word for years on end had been a decisive factor in the lives of 400 million people, a man who ruled in his nominal master's name a larger land area than all the Japanese islands together, came to beg for peace, and the earlier so reviled *Wo-jēn* now condescended

* As a thank you for the help, Mr. Foster later received 300,000 *kroner* from the Chinese government plus a lot of expensive presents.

to hear what the Chinese viceroy might have to tell their representative.

No wonder that the Japanese press overflowed with boastful expressions and smug conceit. The Japanese nation may never experience a more prideful moment than when Li and Itō met in Shimonoseki.

The prime minister began the conversation as if they had incidentally met each other at a better dinner party.* After some mutual compliments had been exchanged, the credentials were presented and found to be satisfactory. Count Itō then remarked on the previous envoys credentials in a somewhat disparaging vein and said he hoped that the viceroy's commission was a sign that China really desired peace. Li then replied with strong emphasis on each word:

"Your Excellencies may be assured that if my Government had not been actuated by a sincere desire to restore peace, I would not have been sent here; and if I had not been of like mind I would not have come."

Count Itō then expressed his hope that the negotiations would have a happy outcome and that an eternal peace could be established. The viceroy shared in this sentiment, since "we cannot but conclude that the policy which should rule the Asiatic continent, is that we should establish an enduring peace in order to prevent the yellow races of Asia from succumbing to the white race of Europe."

Itō replied that the yellow races' supremacy in Asia also lay close to his heart, and asked what had come of all the

* I regret that the space herein does not allow quoting the conversation *in extenso*. They were taken down stenographically.

reforms that he and the viceroy had talked about during his visit to Tientsin in 1885. Li replied:

"I very much appreciated what Your Excellency said then, and have since admired your energy in carrying out reforms in Japan; China, however, is hampered by antiquated customs which prevent desirable reforms. I remember Your Excellency advising that, in view of the vast area and population of China, administrative reforms should be effected gradually; yet, shame to say, ten years have wrought no changes – a proof of our incapacity; while Japan has organized an efficient army after Western models and is constantly perfecting the organization of her government.

When in Peking before starting on this mission I talked over these matters with our Ministers of State, and some of them fully realized that China must reform if she would hold her own."



Count Itō Hirobumi

Japanese prime minister. Born 1839.

Count Itō' reply to this was worthy of Confucius: "Heaven is impartial and speeds the right. If China will but make an effort help will come from on High. Let there be the will and Heaven, who cares alike for us all, will not forsake you; thus a nation may control its own destiny."

The viceroy's practical mind refused to follow Count Itō to this rarified plane, and we may imagine his tolerant expression when he just briefly answered: "Japan is most fortunate in having so able an administrator as Your Excellency."

"The success is due to the virtues of my Gracious Sovereign, not to me," said Itō with a modest mien.

After some conversation that did not directly pertain to the peace negotiations, the meeting broke up and Li at the same time handed the prime minister a proposal for an armistice.

The next two days were taken up by discussion of Count Itō's demand that Japanese troops should occupy Taku, Tientsin, and Shan-hai-kuan.

To this the viceroy replied: "Your armies have not yet reached Taku, Tientsin or Shan-haikuan, how then can you make their occupation of those places a condition of the armistice?"

Count Itō said: "Both sides must benefit by an armistice. Your army profits by a suspension of hostilities; ours must hold those three places as guarantees."

After a lengthy discussion about unconditional and partial armistices during which Itō again insisted on his conditions, the viceroy said with impressive pathos: "Your Government did me the honor to invite me to come to negotiate for peace.

I came with a genuine desire to accomplish that object and my Government has the same purpose; but when I introduce the subject of armistice I am met by your demand for the surrender of three vital military positions. I am Viceroy of the province of Chihli and these places are within my jurisdiction. My personal reputation is at stake. Let me ask, Count Ito, how *you* would feel under these embarrassing circumstances?"

Itō replied: "Your Excellency has come whilst our countries are at war, and in the interest of China you have proposed an armistice. The interests of my country require me to say that these are the only terms we can offer."

Li said: "Pray think of some other plan that will show your Government to be really intent upon peace."

Count Itō: "Truly I cannot. In time of war each side must guard its own interests. Public duty must be kept apart from private sentiment. Armistice while war is going on must be based on international practice."

Li then proposed that they should go over to negotiate about the peace treaty, but Itō first wanted to hear if the request for an armistice had been withdrawn.

Li replied: "I said yesterday at our first interview that we should speak our minds freely, so I am bound to tell Your Excellency that I cannot accept your terms of armistice."

Itō said: "The Armistice was Your Excellency's own proposal, in response to which we have stated our conditions; but if you are willing to abandon the question of armistice there is nothing to prevent our proceeding at once with the peace negotiations."

To which Li replied: "While we must each loyally guard the interests of his own country, that should not prevent our taking a broad view of the future issue of these negotiations. China was not prepared for a foreign war; her armies are largely composed of raw, undisciplined levies, and the result is seen in the present situation. As close neighbors China and Japan cannot always be at strife as now. Sooner or later they must make peace, and it should not be a disgraceful peace for China lest the whole nation, high and low, chafe under the humiliation; peace under such conditions cannot be lasting.

Now, Tientsin and Shan-hai-kuan are the portals of Peking. I would therefore ask Your Government not to direct its armies against those places and thereby cause confusion at the capital and alarm throughout the empire, not to mention special difficulties for me. Again, Korea was the real cause of the war; all Chinese troops have now withdrawn from that country to Manchuria; your forces have not yet reached Chihli, and if they are not moved against Tientsin, Shan-hai-kuan and Chihli we need not further discuss armistice but may proceed at once with the negotiations for peace."

Count Itō only repeated the previously stated conditions and refused to take up discussion of the peace treaty until the question of armistice was decided. The viceroy demanded time to think about it, which was granted.

The next meeting took place on the 24th of March, without the question having been decided.

When Li Hung-chang returned to his residence late in the afternoon, one of these unforeseen events that sometimes strongly influence the history of nations occurred. The viceroy may never have agreed to the conditions for

armistice, and then the European powers' itch to meddle in the conflict might have become too strong to resist. One of these half-mad political fanatics, of which Japan has so many, thought to do his country a great service by assassinating China's premier statesman. Despite the numerous guards and plainclothes policemen, he succeeded in approaching the viceroy's sedan chair and firing a revolver. The bullet failed to find its mark. It hit Li's face, but not with enough power to penetrate the chinbone – and the Japanese nation escaped being called to history's judgment for a despicable sneak murder.

All right-thinking Japanese were appalled by the crime, and the *mikado* and his government acted as resolute men. As soon as Li Hung-chang came back to consciousness, the *mikado's* message of condolences was received along with a statement that *the armistice was granted without conditions*. This great news immediately flew around the world telegraphed by the wire services, and the Europeans greatly admired the Japanese people's magnanimity.

Despite his advanced age, the assassination attempt did not weaken the viceroy's strength for long. Already a week after this unexpected break in the negotiations, Li wished to study Itō's draft for the peace treaty. As was to be expected, the prime minister had screwed the demands up to such height that they could be significantly reduced, for which ample occasion was provided during the following conference sessions on the 10th, 15th, and 16th of April, and on the 17th of April 1895 Li Hung-chang and Itō on behalf of their respective nations signed the peace treaty, the main points of which may be summarized as follows:

- I. China recognizes Korea's independence.
- II. China relinquishes to Japan:
 - a. That part of Manchuria south of the 41st latitude from Yalu to the Liao River – including the treaty port Yinkow (Niuchuang).
 - b. Formosa.
 - c. The Pescadores.
- III. The war reparations are established as 300 million Yen, payable in 7 annual installments with 5% interest. If the whole sum is paid within 3 years, no interest will be due.
- IV. Commercial and other privileges that other nations enjoy as most favored nations, shall also be extended to Japanese citizens.
 - a. Japanese citizens may reside in the cities of Shasih, Chungking, Hangchow, and Soochow.
 - b. Japanese ships shall be allowed to sail on the rivers and canals that lead to Chunking, Hangchow, and Soochow.
 - c. Japanese citizens shall be allowed to establish factories in the treaty ports.
- V. In the new trade treaty, which will be concluded later, China shall acknowledge Japan's customs tariff, and Chinese citizens shall be subject to Japanese jurisdiction, while Japan will keep jurisdiction over its own citizens in China.
- VI. Wei-hai-wei will be occupied by Japanese troops at China's expense as surety for the war reparations.

- VII. The Chinese government commits to not punishing prisoners returned by Japan, nor Chinese who may have had connections to the Japanese army during the war. China will return all Japanese prisoners of war.
- VIII. The peace treaty will be ratified in Chefoo three weeks after the treaty is signed.

*

*

*

The Roman historian Tacitus once wrote: "War has a good end when it ends with forgiveness, since then the desire for retribution, which always follows harsh peace conditions, falls away."

If we consider all peace settlements of the last several centuries, we will hardly find a single instance where a magnanimous treatment of a defeated enemy has not had good consequences – and the contrary when the peace conditions have been too hard.

War should be the last resort when a question of divergent national interests arises. A nation may be obliged to fight an unproductive war. To reject a shameless challenge may injure the national sense of honor, and a sense of honor is one of the characteristics that lift mankind over brute animals.

A defensive war – even though it leads to defeat – will always have its value. It cleans and lifts the national character and ties the social organization closer together. Such battles remain in the memories of coming generations as a treasured inheritance. But a war of aggression that is the result of out of control arrogance will have other consequences – and this, the Japanese will come to learn – sooner or later.

Chapter Thirty-five

Continuation of the winter campaign in Manchuria

As earlier stated, General Sung had finally stopped the Japanese army's advance by New Year's and formed a line of defense from Kaiping to Liaoyang.

Great efforts were made in Peking to send him more troops. The old viceroy of Nanking, Liu Kun-yi, who had won much experience in earlier wars, was called up to the north and appointed top commandant over all Chinese troops. He set up his headquarters in Shan-hai-kuan in order to block the path to the capital if the Japanese should get that far when spring arrived.

A few thousand men were also sent to General Sung under command of Wu Ta-cheng, who had left his post as governor in Hunan to serve as a volunteer in the war.

But he came to regret this step, as his inexperienced soldiers played the most pitiful role against the disciplined Japanese. The bombastic proclamations, which this otherwise very honorable official issued, made him a laughingstock for both General Sung's soldiers and the Japanese.

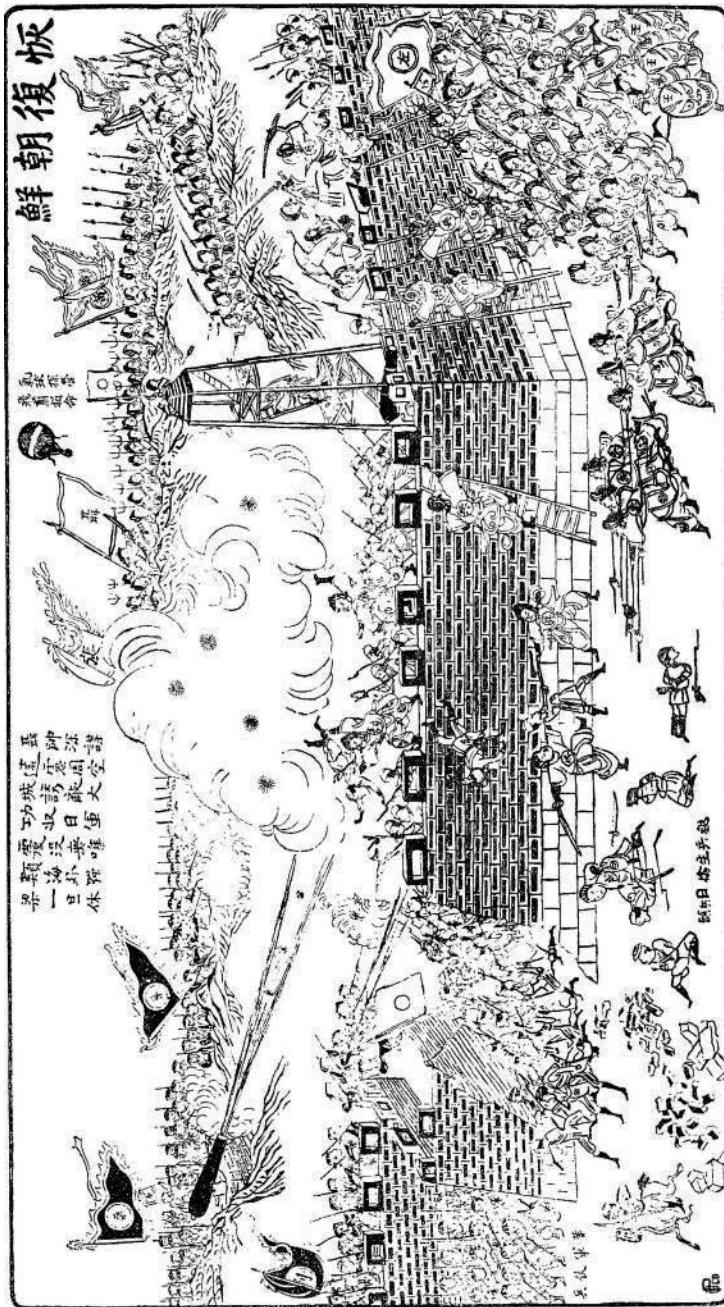
Han Pien-wei, the aforementioned rebel chief, to whom Sung had given the rank of general, on the other hand, proved

to be a valiant officer. On the 17th of January he attacked the Japanese positions at Haichêng with 10,000 men. The outpost retreated quickly, and the Chinese followed right up to the city walls. But here they received such violent fire from the Japanese batteries that they had to withdraw with a loss of several hundred men.

Han Pien-wei was wounded, but still renewed the attack again on the 21st, though with the same result, and he then gave up the attempt to re-take Haichêng.

For all of the next month the two armies stood opposite each other. The hard winter hampered almost all warfare. The Japanese and Chinese both suffered badly from the cold, and the hospitals overflowed. In the treaty port Yintse, or Niuchuang as it is commonly known, several English and American missionaries had set up field clinics. The blessed acts of mercy they performed through this winter have surely had more effect on the Chinese than years of their predicanter brothers' exhortations. The doctors themselves apparently can testify that the "ungrateful heathens," who stubbornly resist being persuaded by "The Word," prove to be quite amenable – when the missionary effort takes a practical form.

Toward the end of February the Japanese began to advance on all fronts. Sung in vain tried to push them back. On the 4th of March the Japanese took Niuchuang by storm. The Chinese had withdrawn inside the walls. The streets were barricaded, and the Japanese had to fight from house to house. After 13 hours of bitter fighting in the streets, the Chinese gave up the city to the enemy and retreated across the Liao River.



Popular representation of the attack on Haichêng.

Reproduction of a Chinese picture.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

At the same time General Nogi had moved up from Kaiping to take possession of the treaty port Yintse. Several coastal forts lay near the riverbank, and the Chinese had taken a very strong position there.

The large guns in the forts brought the Japanese to a halt, but Nogi made detour around them in the night and attacked the Chinese from the rear. All the forts were taken by storm.

General Sung now had to withdraw completely from the Liao River's east bank, while leaving a large corps to the north to cover Liaoyang.

This was the situation in Manchuria when the ceasefire was agreed on the 24th of March.

Chapter Thirty-six

From Shimonoseki to Chefoo

Li Hung-chang came back to Tientsin on the 20th of April. As soon as the contents of the treaty became known, the Chinese grandees got busy sending most urgent demands to the emperor that he deny ratification. They proposed continuing the war to the last rather than agree to such a dishonorable peace. The old viceroy was called a traitor to his country, and several of his powerful enemies even advocated to the emperor that he be executed for high treason. What especially brought the shortsighted patriots' blood up was the surrender of Liaotung – a part of the imperial dynasty's old homeland. Li took the uproar with stoic calm. During the most serious crises of China's recent history he has never acted on the mob's clamor – and it is just this great quality that has made him fit for the most prominent leadership position in his enormous native country.

Most of his own countrymen have never understood his clear-sighted policies. They have simply seen his plans for reforms as treason against the old traditions. This has been China's misfortune. If he in the last 20 years had received

loyal support from more of the empire's other viceroys, an attack from the much smaller Japanese empire would not have been possible.

Nor were the Japanese especially happy with the peace treaty. The driving inspiration for the people's willingness to loyally sacrifice had been the thought of dictating the peace in Peking; this idea had inspired the Japanese writers' prose and poetry during the war. To miss a triumphant victory parade in the Celestial Empire's capital – this was a hard nut to swallow, and the frustrated expectations voiced in the press would soon grow even louder.

Li Hung-chang's efforts during the peace negotiations in Shimonoseki were particularly directed toward getting the war reparations and commercial preferences reduced, in which he had also been quite successful.

He probably had already got firm assurances from the Russian ambassador during his stay in Peking that Russia would intervene if the Japanese demanded territory on the Asian mainland, and Russia's helping hand was not long in showing itself. It was of the greatest importance for Russian influence in East-Asia to keep Liaotung out of the victors' hands. France at that time was eager to prove its friendship to her unnatural ally. A wink from the Russian bear, and the French eagle was immediately willing to come along.

Oddly enough, Germany also joined in the threat of intervention. We do not know what commercial preferences Li Hung-chang may have offered the Germans, but they must have been substantial, since Germany certainly damaged its trade relations with Japan by going along with it.

Already on the 23^d of April, the three major powers' ambassadors in Tokyo delivered to the Japanese government a note that despite its friendly form was not to be misunderstood. They wished that Japan would give up the demand for permanent possession of Liaotung, since the balance of power in East-Asia otherwise would be disturbed.

As precedent for their "friendly" representations, the ambassadors pointed to the Congress of Berlin in 1878, which revised the peace settlement in the Treaty of San Stefano agreed by Russia and Turkey three months earlier. On this occasion, the other major powers deprived Russia of almost all the fruits of its victory over Turkey.

The ambassadors' note caused great consternation within the Japanese government. The cabinet was immediately called together in Hiroshima to discuss the situation, *which was as critical as it possibly could be*. On one side the victory intoxicated people, who already were discontented with the original treaty. If the government now was to go along with such a material change as abandoning the claim on Liaotung, an immediate revolutionary eruption could be expected. On the other side stood the major powers with their "friendly" representations, and there was no doubt they were meant to be taken seriously. The French, Russian, and German warships in East-Asia had already begun to congregate.

Marshal Yamagata, who had been appointed minister of war after his return from Manchuria, immediately took measures to protect the most important ports so as to be prepared for all eventualities. A 4th army corps, which had been called up for the purpose of continuing the war more

emphatically if the peace negotiations had failed, also received orders to stand ready.

Meanwhile the ambassadors were waiting for an answer. The discussions in the Japanese cabinet were kept in strict secrecy due to the agitated mood of the people. The half-official newspaper *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* even was suspended, just because it had dared to report that the *mikado* had called the cabinet together.

Fortunately for the Japanese nation, its ruler was surrounded by patriotic, clear-sighted men who understood what the situation demanded. If Russia had stood alone, the government might have given a forceful reply to the offensive note, but against 3 major powers, the outcome might be problematic.

After several days had passed, the government finally let the ambassadors know that, though it denied any right on their part to meddle in its relations with China, Japan was still willing to content itself with the part of Liaotung lying south of Latitude 40 – out of regard for maintaining peaceful relations between the powers.

Meanwhile the deadline for ratifying the peace treaty came closer and closer. In Peking there was heated agitation for persuading the emperor to reject ratification and continue the war. Only a few ministers led by Prince Kung opposed the public's opinion.

It now became apparent that the Japanese government had been wise to hold off the peace negotiations until Li Hung-chang was appointed to the task. He alone could ensure the ratification of the treaty. It is very probable that Kwang Hsü would have yielded to the heavy pressure from all sides if the

old statesman had not stood by his side. *Li Hung-chang advised him to ratify and that was sufficient.* The young emperor had acquired boundless trust in his powerful subject after dealing with him face to face.

The viceroy's secretary Wu Ting-fang, who had participated in the last two peace missions, and a high-ranking Manchu named Lun were designated to meet with Japan's plenipotentiary representative in Chefoo. The Japanese cruiser "*Yaeyama*" arrived at Chefoo in the morning of May 8th with the envoy Count Itō Miyaji onboard. The *mikado* still had not given in to the 3 major powers. The Russian and German warships that lay in the harbor cleared for battle. The whole civilized world expected that war might break out at any moment, since the grace period for ratification expired at midnight. However, later in the day Wu Ting-fang got a telegraphic message that the American ambassador had managed to get a time extension of 48 hours.

This reprieve turned out not to be necessary. At the last moment, the Japanese government advised the major powers' ambassadors that it found it could agree to their proposal to give up permanent occupation of Port Arthur also in return for an increase in the war reparations.

The revised peace treaty of Shimonoseki was ratified shortly before midnight, and with this *the 1st Act of the East-Asian Question came to an end.*

*

*

*

I have earlier mentioned that the violent fight between the Japanese government and the parliament was a significant factor in causing the war with China to break out in 1894.

The war was the Itō ministry's lifesaver. The victory celebrations silenced all opposition, but when it was reported that the government had been obliged to give up Liaotung, the fighting broke out all over again. It did not help much that Count Itō tried to muzzle the press by suspending a number of newspapers. There was always a paper here and there that spoke for public opinion. Thus the *Yarodzu Choho* wrote a few days after the ratification:

"The government has forbidden the newspapers to publicize anything connected to certain alterations in original treaty. Suspension often means financial ruin for a defiant publisher. At this time 45 papers are banned because they have printed some sparse reports about the matter. The lack of knowledge has created a very strong tension in public opinion. The government seeks to extinguish the flames of indignation by all means at hand. We will see if this will succeed. The government has doubtlessly feared that opinions expressed in the media will make the situation more difficult. Or it may have lost it the use of its senses from panic. However, we have too much trust in the government's peaceful intent to believe that it will provoke a war with the European coalition. But the people would rather risk our national existence in battle. Russia's demand truly is unreasonable. We permit ourselves to state that this major power's behavior can be described as banditry, and that kind of treatment we should not tolerate. We are resolved to risk our lives for this principle. We have given the government

adequate time for diplomatic negotiations. But if the difficulties are avoided by calling a quick retreat when confronted by Russian avarice, then all is lost. Civil war will soon break out – a prospect against which a war with Russia is a mere bagatelle. Instead of passing the time with diplomatic negotiations, let us rather find out what chances we have for waging a successful war against Russia, or all 3 powers together."

The influential newspaper *Jiji Shimpō*, however, took a more realistic view of the situation. The editor referred to earlier interventions after European wars and did not find it surprising "that Japan has been obliged to relinquish Liaotung in its own interest and that of peace in the Orient. There is now nothing else to do for Japan, but to stay quiet and exert itself to build more solid foundations for national strength by arming itself. When there in the future is a favorable opportunity in the Orient, then Japan will be able to do as the nation wishes. We will not only be able to take revenge on those who have meddled in our affairs, but we will have the necessary strength to negate their plans if necessary."

Chapter Thirty-seven

Epilogue

Taiwan, or Formosa, which is separated from the Chinese mainland by a ca. 200 kilometer wide strait, is one of Asia's largest islands.

Taiwan was mentioned in Chinese works already in the seventh century, but Spanish and Portuguese pirates were the first to settle on the island, and they called it Formosa – the beautiful – for its magnificent natural setting.

In 1624 the Dutch drove out the Spanish and the Portuguese. They built several forts to defend the island against their rivals, and the ruins of the fort "Zeeland" can still be found near the capital Taiwan, or Tainan.

When the Ming dynasty was deposed by the Manchus in 1644, many Chinese fled to Formosa and under their leader Coxinga drove the Dutch from the island. Coxinga's successor later submitted Formosa to Emperor Kang Hi, and the Chinese have ruled the island since.

The aboriginal inhabitants belong to the Malayan race. Some have intermixed with the Chinese population, but the

majority still live in half-wild conditions in the mountainous regions on Formosa's east coast.

In the 1880s the well-known progressive leader Liu Ming-chuan was governor on the island. Here he had a large enough field for his restless energy, since Formosa is one of the world's most blessed lands. But Liu went ahead too fast. He brought in a whole staff of European officers, engineers, and geologists and tried to import all the modern world's improvements at once with a wave of his magic wand. These enterprises cost many millions, and the inhabitants complained several times to Peking about the high taxes. He was finally recalled in 1891.

Liu Ming-chuan's work will probably find a successor, and Formosa will then enter a brilliant future in commercial respects.

The news about Formosa being relinquished to Japan caused great indignation in southern China, especially in the Fukien province, which had been joined with the island for many years under one viceroy. Most Chinese families on Formosa had come from Fukien and had always maintained close connections with their old homeland.

Petition after petition was sent to Peking, and several rich merchants even offered to buy back the island, but the Japanese, as could be expected, would not let go of this glorious war trophy that they had lusted for so long.

Formosa then decided to take matters into its own hands. The famous Liu Yung-fu had been sent to Formosa at the

beginning of the war to organize its defenses. This man's name is little known in Europe, though many have heard of "The Black Flag." Liu Yung-fu won his fame as commander of this well-organized Chinese army in the Tongking War, where thousands of French mothers got reason to cry for their sons who were sent out to this unwelcoming country to fight Liu's intrepid soldiers.

When the peace was concluded in 1885, "The Black Flag" was disbanded, and those who did not prefer to stay in Tongking and help the people there in their endless war with France, went to Canton under a leader who got them hired into the provincial army. When the emperor ordered Liu Yung-fu to go to Formosa, several hundred of his old soldiers followed him over to the island, and with their help he got Formosa's defenses brought up to very respectable standards.

A couple of months after the Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed, the island was to be officially handed over to the Japanese. But Liu, who knew he could count on the entire population's sympathy – and support from the mainland – decided to steal a march on the conquerors. *On the 20th of May the Chinese governor, Tang Chin-sung, was forced to proclaim Formosa independent and himself president of the new republic*, and when the Japanese came to take possession of the island, they were met by a resistance compared to which the Korean campaign had been child's play.

Governor Tang managed to escape from his hazardous post, but Liu Yung-fu is still fighting the Japanese for possession of the island. He hopes to keep them at bay until new political developments between the Japanese and the European powers can bring him help. The political skies of

East-Asia still look dark – Liu Yung-fu's fate lies hidden in the unforeseeable future.

*

*

*

History frequently repeats itself. What happened in Korea 300 years ago will probably more or less happen again.

When Hideyoshi's wild hordes sailed across the sea again in 1598, they brought something with them from the devastated country. Besides several thousand Korean ears, the Japanese also carried many shiploads of examples of Korea's high cultural level in industry and the arts. These treasures, which were spread among the island homes of the returning soldiers, have had a large influence on the great cultural developments that have taken place in Japan since then.

When the Japanese now must soon withdraw from Korea, their positive gains will mostly consist of useful experience in diverse fields. This time they cannot bring much in the way of material goods back to Japan as compensation for their sacrifices in the war, since Korea now is a poor country.

The Japanese doubtlessly had expected to awaken the peninsula to a new life, develop its natural resources, and thus indirectly get back their investment in money and human lives.

I also believe that the Japanese would have been able to do it. Their energetic reforms in Korea during the last year show that they have had the *will* – but their capability was undermined by their past history. The seeds of hate and bitterness they sowed 300 years ago have borne much too

plentiful fruit. All the Japanese authorities' useful and well-meant reforms fell impotently to the ground due to the Korean people's passive and active opposition.

Mr. Otori was recalled some time after the war broke out. A more elastic diplomat, Count Inouye, was then sent to replace him as the *mikado's* representative in Seoul. But Inouye as well has had to give up this thankless appointment, and another diplomat has taken over the peacemaker's role. The results do not appear more promising for that. The telegraph has already reported that Korea's highly gifted queen has been murdered – apparently she was in the way of the Japanese expansionary drive. If that will improve the conquerors' prospects, time will tell, but I do not believe it.

The Russian bear lies in wait for a favorable occasion to deprive the Japanese of their prize, and I believe that sooner or later they will succeed. Russia's Asian policies are farsighted and tolerant. That may sound a little odd to us, who are accustomed to look at the Russians as semi-barbaric, but it is true, and I think the Koreans would benefit from a few years under Russian control. Since the people do not want the Japanese, it must be the Russians. The Chinese have enough to do with reforming themselves and will hardly have any influence in Korea later.

Right now the 3 intervening powers exert heavy pressure in Tokyo to get the Japanese away from Liaotung. Russia mistrusts Japan's promises, since these have been followed by very extensive military armaments plans.

If the Japanese will withdraw from the Asian mainland will depend on which party in Japan wins the next election.

The war party insists that the Russian demands shall meet a determined rejection if they grow to be too aggressive. The party's most influential members feel that Japan should not wait until the Trans-Siberian Railway is completed. The battle will of course be hard. The Japanese navy may draw the shortest straw against the combined allied fleets, but Japan should run the risk rather than acquiesce in losing all the fruits of the war with China and its prestige in Asia, which it has sacrificed so much to win. Russia is not yet capable of invading the Japanese islands, and, even if the Russians and their eventual allies should win the war, they cannot not demand any more than that Japan withdraw from the Asian mainland. On the other hand, victory at sea would also mean the fall of Vladivostok, and then Japan might be able to bar the Russians from the ocean and thus crush their influence in East-Asia for a long time.

This aggressive policy has strong approval among the people, whose patriotic pride has been so deeply wounded by the major powers' threats.

The governing party and the more cool-headed politicians on the other hand, seem to think that Japan ought to withdraw of its own volition, since Korea and Laotung will only become a burden for Japan. A drawn out war will weaken the country's economy. Japan should rather stick to being East-Asia's England and develop its industry and commerce while also strengthening its military.

It is difficult to say which party will win out in the future, since there are a number of other factors that can throw off probability calculations for the future of Japanese politics.

*



*Believe me,
Yours very sincerely*
李鴻章

Li Hung-chang and his signature.

(This page intentionally left blank.)

Shortly after the war began, the Japanese government concluded new treaties with England and America. These revised treaties will, among other effects, have a large influence on the respective countries' subjects in Japan, since the extraterritorial rights – the right to exercise their own jurisdictions over their citizens in Japan – falls away in 1899.

The other European countries will probably then also be obliged to revise their old treaties. In the early years of the next century Japan will thus for the first time be able to exercise its full sovereign rights over all Christian nations' citizens that may find themselves within the boundaries of the empire.

According to §5 of the peace treaty, a new trade treaty also was to be concluded between China and Japan. The negotiations began last fall between Li Hung-chang and the Japanese representative. When this task is concluded, the old viceroy will retire from the public forum and leave a large void to be filled by younger men.*

His storm-filled life has been one long battle against reactionary stagnation, but the fight has not been in vain. Li Hung-chang will hardly see much results of his missionary work before he mounts the dragon and fly up in the sky – he is already well beyond our allotted three score and ten – but

* Li Hung-chang will probably spend the rest of his life in Peking as the emperor's personal advisor. (See his biography in "From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain.")

when the Chinese nation eventually erect the memorial for him he deserves, it will surely be with acknowledgement of Li Hung-chang as the greatest representative of the "yellow race" in the last several centuries.

There is a Chinese proverb that says: "A tower can be measured by its shadow, and great men by the number of their enemies."

With these words the Chinese really have given him the place of honor – even though they will not yet acknowledge it – since after the Treaty of Shimonoseki no one else of the Celestial Empire's sons has had more enemies.

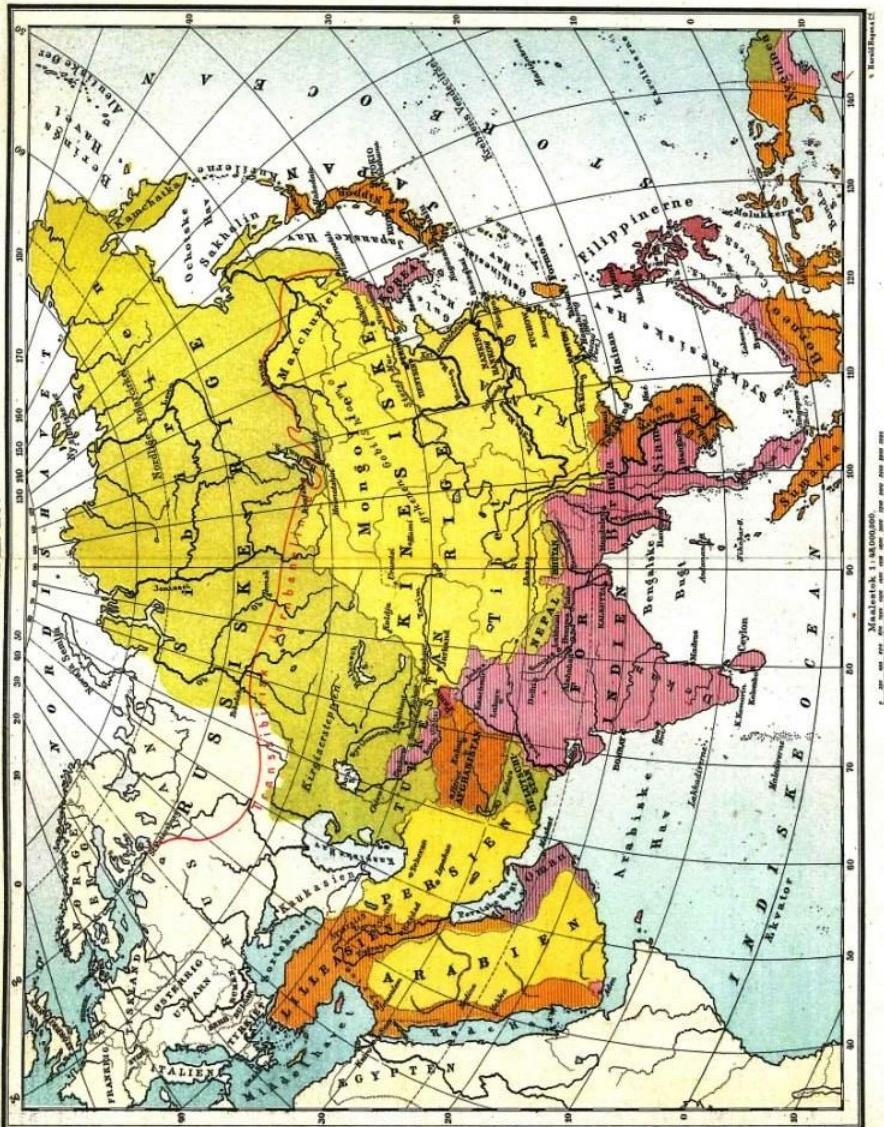
All of us, who wishes a prosperous future for the old, peaceful nation, must hope that the great statesman will have many successors who will continue his work. The colonizing "Christian" major powers probably hope the contrary, but that will have to be as it is.

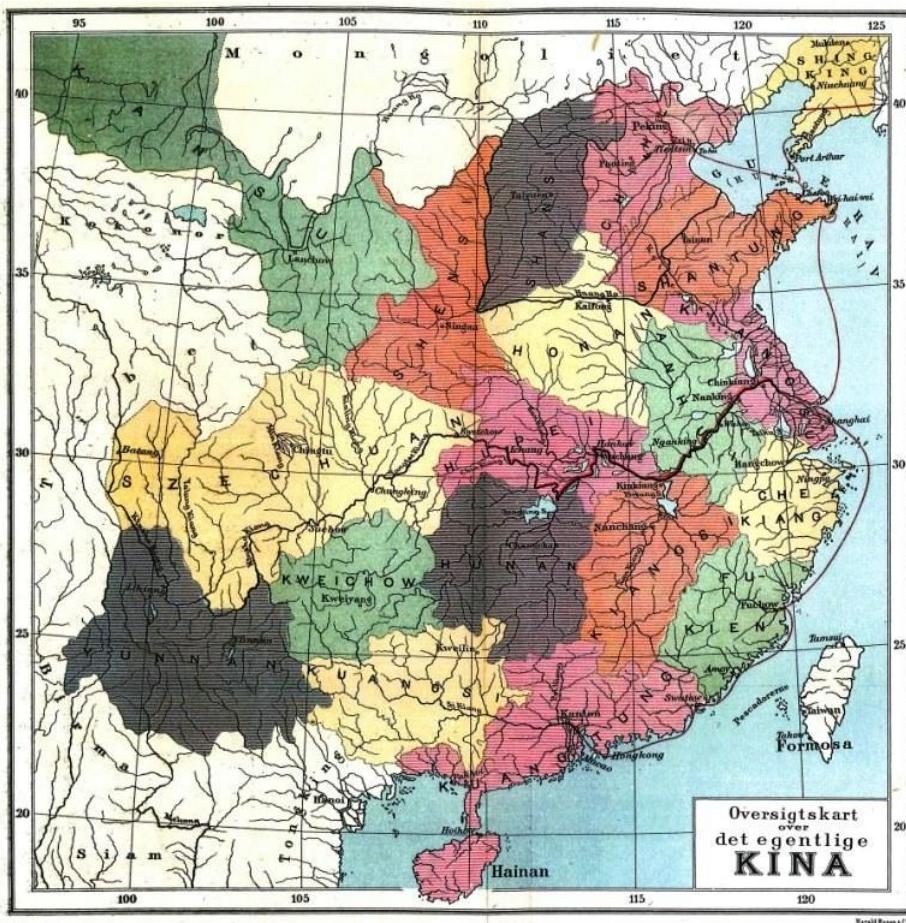
Li Hung-chang is an Asiatic Janus. One face has always been turned eagerly to the future, the other melancholically back toward China's glorious past and proud traditions. From the heights of ancient history he has looked down on Western civilization as a present phenomenon subject to all the winds of social and political changes. But he has never abandoned his faith in his own nation's future.

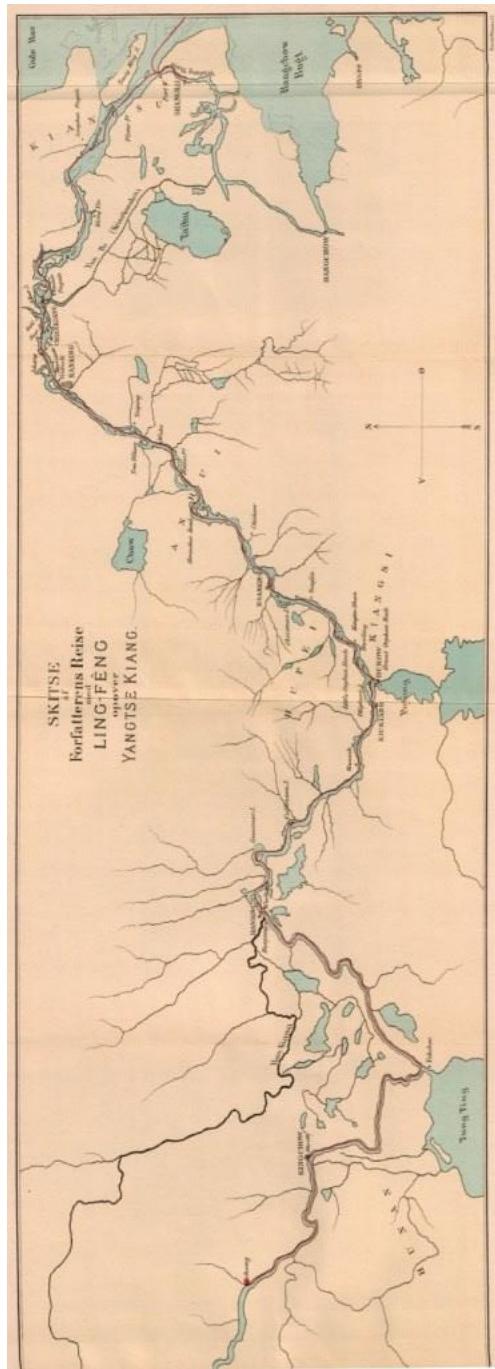
When I was given an interview with the viceroy in 1892, I immediately felt that I was in the presence of a great personality in the true meaning of the word. I could hardly believe that this distinguished gentleman with the fiery, intelligent eyes already had an extraordinarily strenuous and controversial career behind him. But Li Hung-chang's elixir

of life is no secret; it is the tradition that has been – and will continue to be – the reason for the yellow people's astonishing ability to survive. It is, ladies and gentlemen of the white race, moderation in all things.

ASIEN.







KART OVER KRIGSSKUEPLADSEN.

